

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs
Division of Federal Assistance

CONSERVATION Legacy

March 2007

**Pittman-Robertson's 70th
Anniversary**

**The Landowner
Incentive Program**
Steps Toward Success

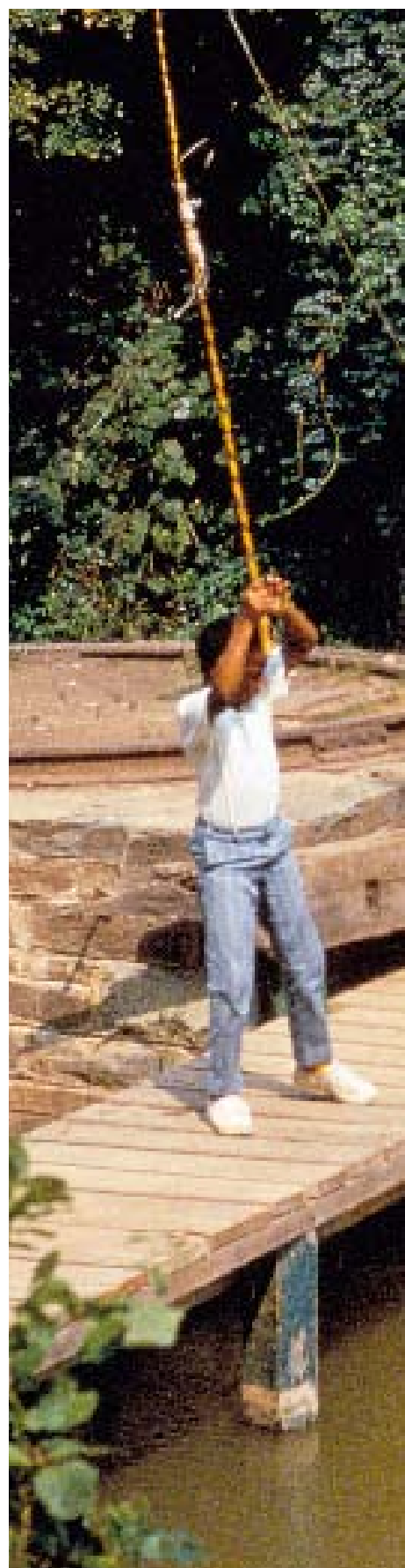
**Catch and Release
of Federal Fuel Tax**
*Reauthorization of
Wallop-Breaux in 2005*

**Industry Investing
in Tomorrow's
Conservationist Today**

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USFWS

The Federal Assistance Programs 1937-2007 – 70 Years and Counting

An Impressive Past, An Optimistic Future

Glen Salmon
Indiana Department of
Natural Resources

Back in November, the Joint Task Force on Federal Assistance Policy had the opportunity to meet in Kansas. Before getting down to the business at hand, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) Assistant Secretary Keith Sexson, invited some of us to tour land that Kansas had enrolled in their Walk In Hunter Access program. KDWP has successfully used Wildlife Restoration funds to expand their hunter access program to over one million acres. As we walked through the tall grasslands, we came upon a small family farm that had been abandoned for decades. The world just sort of stopped for me as I studied the deserted old homestead. Sure, like everyone else, I had read about the Dustbowl of the 1930's, but there it was; right in front of me. It wasn't just some picture in a book, it was reality. The three strands of barbwire had been pulled from the rickety wooden fence posts surrounding the shack. The window panes were broken or missing, and the weathered structure was one strong wind away from collapsing entirely. Rusting in the backyard stood abandoned farm equipment and the remains of a 1930's vehicle. I couldn't help but think that at one time, a family lived here and called this little piece of Kansas prairie home.

I'm certain the rest of the party on the field trip wondered what I was doing, but I was captivated. I thought that as this poor family packed their belongings and turned away from the land, they had absolutely no concept that wildlife would once again thrive on their little farm. How could they? I'm sure that it was beyond anyone's comprehension, that the dried-up soil, disappearing right before their eyes, would once again provide abundant wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities for hunters. Any such thoughts would have seemed like utter nonsense for this family as they loaded their belongings and escaped from what must have been a dreadful existence.

About the same time that this Kansas family was abandoning their home, a group of visionary conservation leaders took a stand for America's wildlife. The partnership that was forged 70 years ago between the State fish and wildlife agencies, industry and the USFWS by the creation of the Federal Assistance programs literally changed America's wildlife resources forever. All over America, wildlife is thriving today thanks, in part, to the efforts of this State-Federal-Industry partnership. Standing on the shoulders of biologists, administrators, legislators, educators and industry leaders that have gone before

us, the conservation team that we field every day fully recognizes the challenges and accepts the responsibilities. It is our time.

Over the last year, this strong partnership continues to strive to add to this amazing success story. Some highlights for the past year include holding an industry summit to strengthen our ties with the manufactures that pay the Federal excise tax, forming a State/Federal team to begin the process of writing a strategic plan for the Federal Assistance programs and to continue to work to standardize the way Federal Assistance rules and regulations are administered. We do this as partners. We do this together. We do this remembering that the family in Kansas that abandoned their little farm represents a time in American history when our wildlife resources had dropped to desperate levels. Seventy years ago, those wildlife resources cried out for help and the conservation family responded. It doesn't really matter the color of the uniform or the wording on the patch on the sleeve. These are America's wildlife resources and it's our turn to conserve them, together.



*Courtesy of Indiana Department
of Natural Resources*

All Fifty-Six Wildlife Action Plans Approved

In January 2007, USFWS Director, H. Dale Hall signed off on 56 Wildlife Action Plans. This event marked both an end to, and the beginning of, what many tried-and-true biologists consider to be the most exciting and promising opportunity of their careers for creating effective and lasting wildlife conservation.

This effort started back in 2002 and 2003 when Congress mandated that as of October 1, 2005, States must complete Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plans (Wildlife Action Plans) in order to continue receiving State Wildlife Grant funds. States took this challenge very seriously and, with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency's Teaming with Wildlife Committee, drafted a series of Guiding Principles that set a high bar for the plans. We feel that the results of this collaborative approach far exceeded those that could have been obtained through a strictly regulatory approach.

In keeping with the successful tradition of Federal and State partnership, a team was formed to review the plans. This team, the National Advisory Acceptance Team (NAAT), painstakingly reviewed each Wildlife Action Plan. Since each plan was so different in its approach, the NAAT had its work cut out for them; they were cognizant of the effort invested in each of the plans and strove for a fair and consistent review.



NAAT members: Noel Holcomb, Mike Harris, Mike McKenna, and Ed Parker in Stone Mountain, GA. January 2006. Photo: Mike Sweet, USFWS



The NAAT and staff in Stone Mountain, GA. January 2006. Photo: Mike Sweet, USFWS

In the first round of reviews, nearly thirty percent of the plans were “conditionally approved,” that is, States were asked to make adjustment to their plans within six months. In the end, all the plans sailed through the second review with flying colors. Many States went above and beyond what was necessary for these plans and created documents that will help guide their agency’s planning for years to come.

Of course, the best is yet to come as we all move from words to actions. And many of us are already thinking about the best way to demonstrate that the State Wildlife Grants Program is living up to its promise. But for now, join us in celebrating the fact that every State and territory rose to the occasion and created fifty-six fine Wildlife Action Plans!

Pittman-Robertson's 70th Anniversary



It might be hard to believe, but the abundant wildlife populations that exist today in America did not exist at the turn of the 20th century. Although the U.S. wildlife conservation movement was already underway by 1900, it was unable to adequately deal with rapidly declining wildlife numbers and their shrinking habitats. Dire predictions about the future of wildlife in America were common.

Although the situation seemed bleak, State, Federal, and privately funded conservationists persevered in their efforts to improve the outlook for the future of wildlife. Thanks to their persistent efforts, some important successes were achieved. Predecessors of today's National Audubon Society, Wildlife Management Institute, and Izaak Walton League were organized. State wildlife agencies were formed, wildlife laws were codified in many States, and the wildlife conservation movement gained momentum.

Early successes included the 1913 Weeks-McLean Act which placed migratory birds under Federal custody, the 1916 Migratory Bird Treaty with Great Britain (for Canada), and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. These major legislative accomplishments were followed by eight years of struggle that resulted in the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929, which authorized the National Wildlife Refuge System.

On the heels of these successes came sudden setbacks associated with the 1929 stock-market crash, the Great Depression, and the droughts, panic, and poverty of the 1930's. The toll on America's wildlife and their habitats was devastating.

Fortunately for wildlife, a prominent group of sportsmen and leaders from business, industry, government, and science emerged. Early on this group included such influential men

as Theodore Roosevelt, George Bird Grinnell, Charles Sheldon, John Burnham, and others. During the tough times in the 1930's J.N. Darling, M. Hartley Doge, Charles Horn, Carl Shoemaker, Aldo Leopold, Thomas Beck, Ira Gabrielson, and Fredrick Walcott continued to drive the wildlife conservation movement forward. These early wildlife conservation visionaries were able to take full advantage of the Federal government's willingness to adopt innovative programs to beat the Great Depression and helped foster the most fruitful decade of wildlife conservation ever.

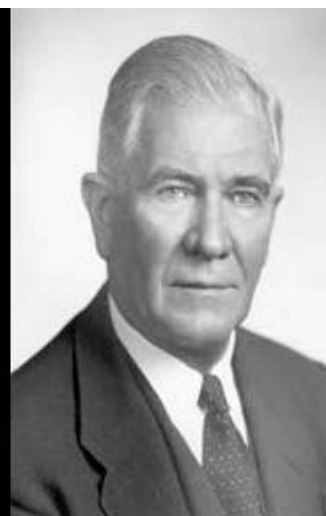
These conservation leaders quickly brought about the enactment of the Duck Stamp and Fish and Wildlife Coordination Acts in 1934, established the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit Program in 1935, organized the first North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in 1936, created the National Wildlife Federation in 1936, and in 1937 pushed the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration program into legislation.

It was at the 2nd North American Wildlife Conference, in March 1937, at St. Louis, Missouri that Carl Shoemaker and other participants decided on a new effort to capture a 10 percent (later increased to 11 percent) excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition for allocation to the States by some equitable formula. Their new effort soon turned into a major undertaking to promote what was to become the P-R program.

Carl Shoemaker has been called the "father of the P-R program" because of his authorship of the original bill, finding sponsors in the Senate and House of Representatives, and shepherding the legislation through Congress in less than 3 months. The most significant amendment to his bill was made by Representative A. Willis Robertson from Virginia, to include language that prevented States from diverting license fees paid by hunters for any use other than the administration of the State fish and game department. The P-R Act was named after its principle sponsors, Senator Key Pittman of Nevada, and U.S. Representative A. Willis Robertson of Virginia.



Pittman



Robertson

All of these early conservation accomplishments were significant, but the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program, also known as the Pittman-Robertson (P-R) program deserves perhaps the highest praise and has been acknowledged as "... the single most productive wildlife undertaking on record." [Restoring America's Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1987]. This book was published in cooperation with State and Territorial wildlife agencies to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the P-R program. It goes on to say, "It has meant more for wildlife in more ways than any other effort. And it is a story of how cooperation gets things done, how States, the Federal Government, private conservation groups, and the sporting arms and ammunition industry joined hands to give Uncle Sam the best wildlife management scheme in the world."

Over the years the P-R Act has seen significant amendments that have extended the Act's impacts on State fish and wildlife agency programs and added further protection for the program's funding. One of the most significant changes was language added to a FY 1951 appropriations bill that gave P-R program funding a "permanent-indefinite" appropriation status. This change allows for all the sporting arms and ammunitions tax collections to be automatic transferred to

the Fish and Wildlife Service and apportioned to the States annually. A 1970 amendment authorized a 10 percent excise tax on handguns and an 11 percent excise tax on archery equipment. Half of these funds collected were made available for use in State hunter education programs and shooting range construction and maintenance. The 1990 Federal Aid Improvement Act included provisions to fund hunter education and shooting range program enhancements, established a Multi-State Grants Program that allows States, conservation groups, universities and NGO's to apply for grant funds for conservation projects that address significant national conservation issues, and clearly defined the range of allowable uses for P-R administrative funds.

As the 70th anniversary of the P-R program draws near, it continues to serve as a model of success for programs that endeavor to work with partners to conserve, protect and enhance wildlife populations and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. Many of America's wildlife conservation success stories over the last 70 years can be directly attributed to conservation leaders early in the 20th century who saw serious conservation needs and went about creating a vehicle to meet those needs. That vehicle was the Federal Aid In Wildlife Restoration (P-R) Act of 1937. The principles

of user pay-user benefit, stable funding, license fee protection, and the partnership approach contained in the P-R Act of 1937 has served America well in our efforts to restore and maintain our rich wildlife heritage.



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The Landowner Incentive Program

Steps Toward Success

Steven P. Riley
Nebraska Game and Parks
Commission

The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) has been around nationally since 2002. Since that time a lot has happened; there have been challenges in implementing the program. That's right; this is a good news-bad news kind of article. The good news is that most States have programs up and running and

grasslands. This is important to stem the impacts of long-term population declines of sage grouse and other sagebrush obligates that have largely resulted from habitat fragmentation and conversion.

LIP began as a pilot program in Texas followed a few years later by a few lines of text in an Interior Appropriation Bill. Congress provided little other guidance and it was largely an act of good faith in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that they would know what to do. As I've already stated, no one had much experience doing what was being asked. Our models of conservation are rooted in buying land and protecting and managing it. Managing other people's land and managing for things they weren't sure they wanted was a heady request...so we jumped at it. Translated, that means that there were a lot of people

in a lot of different places making up the program as they went along. Fortunately, these folks have been energetic, inventive, relentless and very productive.

LIP very quickly became the head start program for implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plans on private lands for most States. While Wildlife Action Plans were rapidly being finalized, there was a small, but significant move afoot to begin doing just the kind of work the plans would prescribe. In most cases, this meant that States had to gear up to do something for which they had limited experience—sometimes none: delivering habitat programs to private landowners to provide protection and enhancement for habitats of declining species.

In addition to having a less-than-clear sense of direction, limited experience, and a lack of infrastructure, LIP faced two other significant problems: a shortage of private lands biologists and a new world order for doing private land work with a Federal funding nexus. The first of these two problems can only be solved by bringing more people into this emerging branch of the wildlife profession. LIP has helped to create new demand



Fig. 1: Before photo of a Nebraska mixed grass prairie restoration site. Photo: Nebraska Game and Parks

delivering conservation; several States programs are hitting their stride and beginning to show big returns in on-the-ground work (the following photos offer some evidence of the kinds of work getting done). The bad news is, the money is being spent too slowly. We have good reasons, but we can do more to get those funds into on-the-ground projects.

As you can clearly see from the Nebraska photos, (Fig. 1 and 2) this site is now a prairie that is more valuable to the landowner, prairie wildlife and to the local economy. In this and many other cases, LIP is providing the leverage to help keep species from becoming extinct, keep the traditional producer on the land and aid rare species. This project is aiding the American burying beetle.

The photo from Montana (Fig. 3) is another example of LIP in action. In this case, the program provides landowners with a one-time payment of \$12/acre for a 30-year commitment to not spray, burn, or plow sagebrush



Fig. 2: After photo of a Nebraska mixed grass prairie restoration site. Cedars were removed to make way for an improved grazing system while returning the site to a prairie condition. Photo: Nebraska Game and Parks



Fig. 3: High quality sagebrush grassland habitat enrolled in the Montana Sagebrush Initiative Photo: Montana Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

and a base of personnel who have experience in the trade. This will continue to be an opportunity as we ramp up our efforts to achieve the objectives of State Wildlife Action Plans because the lion's share of the country is in private ownership. And even in parts of the country with high levels of public ownership, much of the most important wildlife property is under the control of private citizens. Therefore, State Wildlife Action Plans are replete with references to work that needs to be done on private lands.

Finally, there is the issue of using Federal money on private lands. To be brief, our experience with using Pittman-Robertson funds for land conservation have long been tied to land owned or controlled by the States. All of our rules and regulations and approaches in the land management arena stem from that model. The private landscape poses new questions. Some include, "How do we ensure that the landowner will keep up his end of the agreement for the long haul?" "How do we deal with NEPA and SHPO when each project is on land new to the program?" "How do we ensure that if T&E species utilize the improved habitats that the landowner won't somehow lose control of his property?" These are all serious questions (and there are many more) that require a lot of thought and consideration. We are beginning to work through them, but various States and USFWS Regions have developed solutions to

problems independent of each other and the news has not traveled as well as it might.

All of our difficulties in getting LIP up and running led to delays in spending some of the appropriated funds. This delay continues to be a cause for concern for budget decision-makers. They are asking why they should provide additional funds when they know there are backlogs in numerous States. It's a fair question at some levels and an unfair one at others. Still, they get to ask whatever questions they want and we do need to spend down the funds to remove this question.

In closing, LIP is a fantastic opportunity. We are making great progress with the program and that progress is paving the way for the future of the private lands efforts of the State Wildlife Action Plans. Recently, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in consultation with USFWS decided it was time to do a more formal job of coordinating the program and its implementation. The result of that decision was to create a working group that will draw members and ideas from key people around the country, state employees, USFWS employees and our many and varied partners. These collaborators should help to identify barriers, opportunities and new approaches and share them throughout the country and among organizations.

We are learning and having great

success, but it's been a school of hard knocks. In the final assessment though, LIP will prove to be among the most integral parts of the delivery of the State Wildlife Action Plans.

The new Landowner Incentive Program Working Group will have its first formal meeting in March at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Portland, Oregon. You can find out more about LIP and the Working Group at <http://groups-beta.google.com/group/LIP-WorkGroup>

Due to competitive program needs, funds were not included for LIP in the Fiscal Year 2008 President's Budget. We want to thank Steve Riley for his excellent article about this program and look forward to a continued partnership in the future.

2007 Landowner Incentive Program

Western States LIP Coordinators' Conference

Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) Coordinators from Idaho, Oregon, and Washington organized a 2 ½ day national meeting to discuss LIP issues and processes. The meeting was held in Leavenworth, Washington, from January 10-12, 2007. State Coordinators from California, Nevada, Arizona, Wyoming, Kansas, Alabama, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington attended the meeting. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) representatives from Regions 1 and 2 also were in attendance.

The agenda for the meeting focused on a number of issues: State program summaries, using LIP funds to implement State Wildlife Action Plans the future of LIP, recommendations to the USFWS regarding LIP, mitigation and ecosystem services banking, conservation easement appraisals, recommendations to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies regarding LIP, working with partners, and measuring program success.

Several States that have been successful competing for Tier 2 funds presented accomplishments of their programs. Washington reported restoration or protection of over 8,000 acres of important habitats including estuary/near shore, shrub-steppe, oak woodlands, prairie and wetland habitats, and improvement of 4 miles of instream habitat plus the addition of 50 miles of stream habitat through fish passage projects. Oregon's program has restored over 1,061 acres of crucial habitat primarily in western Oregon, they have ongoing projects on more than 1,000 additional acres and have projects in excess of 4,000 acres pending completion of compliance reviews. Arizona has restored or protected over 30,000 acres of native grasslands with over \$4 million of LIP funding. California uses LIP funding to develop a unique



After photo of Kooskooskie Dam fish passage barrier removal project. Photo: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - LIP Program



Before project photo of Kooskooskie Dam, a barrier to migrating salmon on Mill Creek. Photo: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - LIP Program

monitoring program for habitat restoration activities in the Central Valley. Alabama and Idaho reported on receiving Tier 2 money for the first time in 2006, and their program to put the money on the ground.

Most States at the meeting saw LIP as instrumental to implementing their State Wildlife Action Plans on private land to help direct the use of LIP funds. Most of the States have used their State Wildlife Action Plans to help identify species and focus areas on which to concentrate LIP projects.

State representatives discussed recommendations to the USFWS regarding the November 22, 2006, memo from Deputy Director Stansell regarding the 2007 timeline for several grant programs. States were supportive of the defined timeline and liked the consistency that such a timeline would provide in the future. States also were very concerned about the time it takes to get projects through compliance reviews especially for Section 7 and Cultural Resources, and wanted to work with the USFWS to streamline these processes. We discussed the new authority related to Section 7 that has recently been given to Region 1 and the effort to provide similar authority nationally. For some time, Regions 2 and 5 have had this authority in place.

States asked about the future of the LIP program and we told them that future funding was in question due to



Seasonal wetland resulting from a completed LIP project in the Willamette Valley, OR. Photo: Oregon Department of Fish Wildlife - LIP Program

the high proportion of previously awarded Tier 2 funds that remain unobligated. State representatives spent a fair amount of time discussing how they could reduce the unobligated funding balance as well as garner support for the program.

State coordinators discussed whether or not the topic of mitigation banking had come up in their various states. General consensus was that they did not think it was appropriate to use LIP funding for projects that would be placed into mitigation banks. They also discussed ecosystem service banking and trading of carbon credits on the stock exchange. States felt that reporting LIP accomplishments in the form of carbon sequestering credits and tons of erosion prevented might be a good way to report LIP accomplishments in the future.

States also discussed how they approach obtaining appraisals for potential conservation easements and the use of contract review appraisers versus the Appraisal Services Directorate (ASD). Most states are opting for contract review appraisers because they are quicker. We told them that if they planned to use the ASD in the future, that involving them from the beginning was essential for a quick appraisal review. One of the primary concerns was that often times a Non Government Organization (NGO) decides to apply for LIP funds after completion of the initial appraisal, which is too late to seek ASD guidance.

All of the participants agreed that it was a very productive meeting and that they learned a great deal from hearing how other states are implementing their programs and meeting their challenges. They also agreed that they needed to garner broad support of the LIP program from landowners, NGOs and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has begun an aggressive program to remove barriers to salmon migration with LIP funds, such as these before, during and after photos below of the Twenty Three Mile Creek. Photo: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife



Before



During



After

Partnership for Federal Assistance Programs – Strategic Plan

The strategic planning process is underway for the Partnership for Federal Assistance Programs. By the end of 2007, the process will culminate with a strategic plan that describes major programs activities. State fish and wildlife agencies, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) and the Service's Regional and Washington Office Division of Federal Assistance are all playing a direct, hands-on role in this strategic planning process.

The Partnership for Federal Assistance Programs held a Strategic Plan workshop at NCTC in December 2006; a first step in the strategic planning process. Writing teams from State resource agencies and our Regional and Washington Office staff are working on documents to address the two-phase approach to the strategic plan; one to address the work of grant administration and a second to address the natural resource conservation and management work done by States through Wildlife and

Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) grants. The writing teams are drafting mission, vision and guiding principles statements and providing examples of actions that can be used to highlight the accomplishments and activities of WSFR grant programs. There will be multiple opportunities for additional State agency partners, Regional employees, industry, NGOs, and other stakeholders to participate in the process as it proceeds. A limited-distribution first draft should be available in early summer 2007 and a Federal Register Notice regarding a public release draft is planned for late summer 2007.



The Strategic Plan Kickoff Workshop, December, 2006, was a first step in the Partnership for Federal Assistance Programs strategic planning process. Photo: Christy Kuczak, USFWS



Strategic Plan Kickoff Workshop participants, Photo: Jo Robinson, USFWS.

Revitalizing Partnerships for Conservation

Rachel Britton
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Open space and rural America are in decline. An increasing portion of the population has become urban and disconnected from nature. Much of the general public is unaware of where the funds come from to conserve wildlife and their habitats. There is a need to reconnect the principal funding source (the sporting industry) with those administering the programs (USFWS, Division of Federal Assistance) and delivering the programs (State Fish and Wildlife agencies). A strong partnership and common goals are crucial to the continuing success of the landmark legislation known commonly as the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Acts. The Industry Summit which was hosted by AFWA was the first step in this process.

It's no secret that a large percentage of funding for conservation in America stems from excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment. The impact of this funding is far reaching, and the hunting, fishing, boating, archery and shooting sports industries play a key role in the process from the moment of purchase to investment in conserving a wide variety of wildlife and their habitats. To help further relationships between all parties, on December 18-19, 2006, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies hosted a special "Industry Summit," bringing State fish and wildlife agency Directors, industry leaders and representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service together to discuss the longstanding Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs.

"The summit was an important part of improving the relationship between state fish and wildlife agencies and our industry partners," said Ed Parker, President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Chief of the Bureau of Natural Resources of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. "The excise taxes that they pay on behalf of their customers supports the conservation of our country's fish and wildlife populations and habitat and provides opportunities for outdoor recreation."

The summit provided a forum for fish and wildlife agency leaders to meet and foster better working relationships with industry leaders from sportfishing, hunting, archery and shooting sports industries. With more than 30 leaders in attendance—including National Shooting Sports Foundation, American Sportfishing Association, Horton Manufacturing, Bass Pro Shops, Plano Molding, Archery Trade Association, Wildlife Management Institute, Gateway Feathers, Easton-Hoyt and twelve

State fish and wildlife agencies—discussed the status of current programs that deliver Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration funds and determined ways in which the State and Federal fish and wildlife agencies might better communicate with industry.

Each year, the State fish and wildlife agencies use more than \$250 million in excise tax funds paid on fishing, hunting, shooting and boating equipment for fish and wildlife conservation and management and to recruit and retain new hunters, anglers and boaters. Discussions at the summit were centered on accountability and building better communications between parties, pursuing more visible marketing strategies, and gauging the long-term vision and use of these funds.

"It was a productive session, with a strong focus on collaboration and looking toward the future," said Mike Nussman, President and CEO of the American Sportfishing Association. "The summit provided a platform for us to improve alignment between state, federal and industry programs."

The "Wildlife Restoration Act" (Pittman-Robertson Act), signed in 1937, and the Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson Act), signed in 1950, collectively have raised more than \$10 billion. In addition, the Wallop-Breaux legislation of 1984 increased the tax base to include a portion of the Federal fuels tax and import duties on fishing tackle and pleasure boats. The money is distributed to the states for projects proposed by the states and approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Federal Assistance funds pay for up to 75 percent of the cost of each project while the States contribute at least 25 percent of the cost.

Distribution of Sport Fish Restoration funds to the States is based on the land and water area and the number of fishing license holders in each State. Wildlife restoration funds are made available based on land area and the number of hunting license holders in each State.

This article was reprinted from the AFWA Newsletter.

Catch and Release of Federal Fuel Tax

Reauthorization of Wallop-Breaux 2005



Minnesota Coastal Wetlands Land Acquisition of Clough Island
Photo: Michael Vanderford USFWS

In Fiscal Year 2006, State fish and wildlife agencies receiving funds saw an increase in the annual apportionments anywhere from \$1.1 to \$5.5 million for conservation management. This is attributable to the capture of the entire 18.3-cent Federal fuel tax on motorboats and small engines being paid by anglers and boaters that had been diverted to the general treasury. This resulted in an annual funding boost of \$100 million for the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund which now totals approximately \$570 million per year. These funds are used for important angling and boating projects, such as Sport Fish population monitoring, habitat conservation and restoration, fishing and boating access facility development, aquatic education and boating safety. These additional funds became available on August 10, 2005, when President Bush signed into law one of the most significant pieces of legislation for sport fishing and boating since 1984. This legislation was the reauthorization of Wallop-Breaux and the fuel-tax capture was at its center.

The American League of Anglers and Boaters (ALAB) is an advisory group that met in anticipation of the Wallop-Breaux reauthorization and compiled a set of consensus recommendations. The following were their primary recommendations:

Capture of all of the Federal fuel tax attributable to motorboats and small engines. For years boaters and anglers have been paying the full Federal fuel tax (18.3 cents) but only 13.5 cents of the tax was being captured in the fund. Now anglers and boaters will recover the full amount of their tax payment investment;

Reauthorize the Clean Vessel Act Grant Program, Boating Infrastructure Grant Program and National Outreach and Communication Programs. These Outreach Programs include the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. Each program will receive 2 percent of the Trust fund value annually.

Ensure guaranteed funding for the Boating Safety Grants. This program received 18.5 percent of the total Aquatic Resources Trust Fund, increasing 2005 funding from \$64 million to about \$100 million in FY 2006.

Dissolve (spend down) the Boat Safety Account. The balance in this account with its accrued interest (approximately \$87 million) will be distributed over the next five years to other accounts within the fund.

Fund programs by a percentage. All programs are now assigned a funding level percentage to allow a simpler and more equitable formula (except Administration and Multistate Conservation grants which will remain annually funded at fixed amounts). Therefore, if the balance of the new Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund increases or decreases, so will the programs based upon their percentage. This process was supported by the American Sportfishing Association and a coalition of 33 other fishing and boating organizations.

Percentages are as follows:

Sport Fish Restoration

57% (includes 15 percent for boating access)

Boating Safety Grants

18.5%

Coastal Wetlands Act

18.5%

Outreach

2.0%

Clean Vessel Act

2.0%

Boating Infrastructure

2.0%

Over the years the Sport Fish Restoration Act has been refined and expanded by Congress. Since its inception, more than \$5 billion has been collected and allocated to the States. It is unquestionably the most valuable Federal legislation for anglers and fishery resources, currently delivering approximately \$570 million each year to state fishing and boating programs. The sport fishing tackle and pleasure boat industries which pay the excise taxes provide the key sources of income to the program. We thank them for their participation in this very important program to America's anglers and fishery resources. The Wallop-Breaux trust fund program is up again for reauthorization in 2009.



Lexington Riverfront boat ramp, Lexington, MO. Photo: Dave Pederson, USFWS



Red Star boarding dock and ramp, Cape Girardeau, MO. Photo: Dave Pederson, USFWS



Silver Bay/Lake Superior Safe Harbor and Marina. Photo: Kent Skaar, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Nearly \$2M in Grants for Conservation, Hunter and Angler Recruitment & Retention

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided almost \$2 million in Multistate Conservation Grants to be distributed to seven organizations to implement projects seeking to improve hunting and angling opportunities.

“These programs exemplify what we do for our nation’s outdoors and outdoor traditions,” said Matt Hogan, Executive Director of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. “The shooting sports and angling equipment manufacturers provide financial support for the outdoor infrastructure that benefits fish, wildlife and the people who enjoy pursuing them.”

Many of these grants fund efforts over a three year period, with \$703,873 given in 2007, \$838,606 in 2008 and \$448,722 in 2009. Projects funded include a study on the effectiveness tax incentives to encourage hunting and fishing access on private lands and the creation of a best practices guide for recruitment and retention in outdoor sports.

“What excites me about the programs, this grant support is not just the fact that I’m a hunter and angler myself,” said H. Dale Hall, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “I also know in my heart that ensuring opportunities for youngsters to explore, hunt and fish is the best way to help make the next generation of conservationists.”

Hall’s intuition about creating conservationists is supported by recent research into child development and outdoor experiences conducted by Cornell University researchers. The study found that when youth under 11 years-old had significant experience with unstructured outdoor experience – and hunting and angling were singled out as examples – their conservation awareness and commitment was significantly increased.

The Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP) funds projects that address regional or national level priorities of State fish and wildlife agencies. It was established in 2000 by the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs Improvement Act, which amended the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act. Each year, up to \$6,000,000 is available to fund MSCGP projects. Projects may be funded for one, two, or three years on a calendar year basis.

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies represents the fish and wildlife professionals in the 56 States, the District of Columbia, Commonwealths, and territories, and the Federal agencies of the United States. The Association also represents many provinces of Canada and Mexico. Its core functions are inter-agency coordination, legal services, international affairs, conservation and management programs, and legislation.



USFWS / Lavonda Walton

Coordinating State Wildlife Action Plans

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Region 1 Division of Federal Assistance led several presentations for specific USFWS programs and the Region as a whole to inform staff of the State Wildlife Grants Program and the State Wildlife Action Plans. Following these presentations, the Service sponsored a workshop on July 28, 2006, with most USFWS programs represented and staff from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), to discuss cross-agency collaboration to implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy. These presentations and this workshop were held in response to Director H. Dale Hall's instruction that all USFWS offices will assist States with implementing the States' Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies (State Wildlife Action Plans) wherever consistent with USFWS priorities. The Director's guidance was to look for opportunities to partner with states on mutual plan priorities, where possible.

During this workshop, 36 USFWS and ODFW participants produced a comprehensive report that lists current and future projects that align with the six Statewide Conservation Issues (plus monitoring and evaluation) identified within the Oregon Conservation Strategy. For each project, workshop participants identified partners, key contact people, and known funding sources. Taken as a whole, this information reveals where cross-agency collaboration to implement the Oregon Wildlife Action Plan may occur.

Since the workshop, staff from the ODFW have used this information to contact individuals within the USFWS to discuss these ongoing and future collaboration opportunities, such as ensuring that the databases we are each building are compatible and comprehensive. Similarly, staff from the USFWS's National Wildlife Refuge System have used this information to actively incorporate the Oregon Conservation Strategy into their Comprehensive Conservation Planning process.

The Region 1 Division of Federal Assistance is also planning similar workshops with Washington, Idaho, Hawaii, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



USFWS / Tom Nebel

A Big Boost for Archery and Conservation

Easton Sports Development Foundation

Easton Sports Development Foundation (ESDF) recently announced their grant of \$1,000,000 to the Fondation Internationale de Development du Tir A L'Arc (International Archery Foundation), for education about and expansion of archery. Easton has also pledged to donate an additional \$500,000 in matching funds to the FIDTA.

Increased participation in archery enhances the critical conservation mission of the Federal Assistance Program and all partners in the North American Conservation Model.

For the past 25 years Easton Sports, Inc., one of the most prominent and innovative companies in the archery industry, has been providing funding for the ESDF. In 2006 alone, Easton Sports, through its subsidiary Jas. D. Easton Inc., made multimillion dollar contribution to the ESDF. Easton, via the ESDF, has pledged to donate \$1,000,000 in grants each year to support archery programs. Last year Easton established a second foundation in support of archery.

Easton has a universal and holistic vision for archery, which includes hunting, and expands beyond hunting to encompass archery target ranges, recreational archery in a non-game setting, and equipping archers for competition, including the Olympics. Jim Easton, Chairman and CEO of Easton, states that "The goal is

to educate and expose as many people as possible, youth, seniors, and athletes with disabilities, to the lifetime sport of archery."

Greg Easton and Erik Watts of the Easton Foundation, have targeted their grant monies toward archery education at different levels, reaching middle school, high school, college, and extending to National Olympic team training. Easton grant monies will also be used to develop archery ranges and fund bowhunting education programs, in coordination with educational and governmental organizations. Easton provides support for archery at the U.S. Olympic Training Center, and funds archery programs for many schools, including nine colleges in California.

Doug Easton, founder of Easton, developed the first successful aluminum arrow, and the successful Easton arrow shaft. Given Easton's financial success, Jim Easton is honoring his father Doug by giving back to the sport of archery, the conservation mission, and ultimately America's people and communities.

For more information on the new grant program sponsored by ESDF please contact Erik Watts or Greg Easton, Easton Sports Development Foundation at (801) 539-1400 or write them at 5040 Harold Gatty Dr., Salt Lake City, UT 84116.



Photo: Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

Federal Assistance Training at the National Conservation Training Center

The National Federal Assistance Training Program is located at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. As part of the Washington Office of Federal Assistance (FA), the training program develops and delivers grants management training for FA staff and State fish and wildlife agency grantees. These training courses increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of State and Federal personnel who manage FA grants. This training helps to ensure that FA grant managers consistently apply the laws, rules, and policies that govern FA Program administration.

Training opportunities are provided through classroom courses, workshops, and on-line E-learning activities. Courses currently available include: Basic Grants Management, Project Leaders Course, Grant Writing Workshop, FA Toolkit Introduction and Navigation (e-learning), Introduction to FA Grant Programs and Processes (e-learning), and the Advanced Grants Management Course.

The most recent addition to the list of courses available is the FA Advanced Grants Management Course. This course is intended for experienced State FA Coordinators and accountants, and Federal Assistance staff members. Course participants are expected to have basic knowledge and experience in managing FA grants, or have previously attended the Basic Grants Management Course. The course provides a conceptual and working knowledge of advanced topics with emphasis on managing and monitoring funding sources, accounting for expenditures and reimbursements, financial reporting requirements, monitoring administrative compliance issues, and audit requirements.

Additional course descriptions, scheduling information, training materials, grant manager's resources, and links to the DOI Learn course catalog and on-line course application are available on the Federal Assistance Training Program web site at: <http://training.fws.gov/fedaidd/>.

For additional information contact Steve Leggans at the National Conservation Training Center at (304) 876 - 7927.



USFWS / Carl Zitsman



USFWS / Brian Jonkers

Industry Investing in Tomorrow's Conservationist Today

**Roy Grimes, National Director NASP and
Jennie Rich, KY Coordinator NASP**

The National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) is a cooperative effort between conservation agencies, private organizations, and school systems to engage more students in the educational process.

The NASP was co-created by individuals within the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, the Kentucky Department of Education, and Mathews Archery, based in Sparta, Wisconsin. The group hoped to create a program that would inspire students of all sizes, genders, backgrounds, and abilities to improve their performance at school while learning a skill that promotes appreciation and participation in the outdoors.

The NASP was launched on March 3, 2002 in Kentucky. The pilot program consisted of 21 schools and the training of 30 educators. Every school in the program acquires, at wholesale prices from the NASP an archery equipment kit thanks to several equipment manufacturers including Easton Archery, Pape Inc., Genesis, Morrell, Rinehart, and Block. However, sometimes the cost of equipment is an obstacle and many schools receive assistance from archery clubs and local National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) Chapters.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance also contributed by awarding the first of many Hunter Education Section 10 grants to assist in coordinating the NASP. The program was expected to be in 120 Kentucky schools by 2005—it was in 120 Kentucky schools by 2003. Currently 656 of the State's 1,275 schools have adopted the program. At least one participating school is located in every county in Kentucky. NASP reaches 216,750 kids a year through the corner stone school program. NASP is a target archery teaching program that believes that students should be taught enhanced archery shooting skills and let them decide how to use the skills as archers, hunters, or both. Other activities offered by the local archery industry, after school clubs, other Non-Government Organizations and the State tournaments reach many more.

NASP is a target archery teaching program. We believe students should be taught enhanced archery shooting skills and let them decide how to use the skills as target archer, hunters or both.

One such event "Hunt of a Lifetime" was made possible thanks to the generosity of Fred Pape of Pape's, Inc and other sporting industries. To be eligible for the drawing all they had to do is purchase a hunting license, have a valid hunter safety card and participate in the NASP

offered as part of the school curriculum. Over 440 students/children put their names into the drawing and nine (6 boys and 3 girls) were invited to Pape's lodge in Breckinridge and Hancock counties for their first hunting experience. Throughout the weekend, students were able to have many first-time experiences including learning how to put up hunting blinds, learning how to safely use tree stands and being able to spend time in the field with experienced archers. Equipment was donated for each student thanks to the tremendous support of the archery industry including donations from Papes, Inc., Mossy Oak, Muzzy, Sims Vibration Laboratory, Morrell Manufacturing and many others. Unbelievably, over half of the students were able to harvest an animal, even though this was their first time bowhunting!



2006 National Archery in the Schools Tournament, Louisville, KY. Photo: Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council Evaluating the Clean Vessel Act Program

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director H. Dale Hall has asked the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council to complete an assessment of the Clean Vessel Act (CVA) grant program. The CVA program provides funding to States to construct and/or renovate sewage pumpout and dump stations for boats and to develop educational programs that inform boaters about the importance of proper sewage disposal. The Council's assessment began last September and is expected to last approximately one year.

In his charge letter to the Council, the Director suggested several topics for the Council to consider during their assessment. These include:

- examining the proposal submission and grant approval processes;
- identifying barriers to awareness and use of the program;
- examining the adequacy of the funding ration between inland and coastal States;

- providing recommendations on how to improve the Service's administration of the program to achieve maximum benefits for boating stakeholders; and

- clarifying the relationship between the CVA program and the Clean Marina program.

The Council may include other topics in their assessment of the program.

The Service has awarded States more than \$121 million of CVA program funds since its inception in the early 1990s. In addition to providing funds for the construction of sewage pumpout facilities, other examples of program activities include the operation and maintenance of sewage pumpout facilities, purchasing and operating sewage pumpout boats, and constructing floating restrooms for boaters.



Members of the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council's Clean Vessel Act (CVA) Program Review Committee met with FWS staff at the conclusion of the States Organization for Boating Access conference to begin their review of the CVA program. The Council's final report and recommendations are expected later this year.

Anniversaries – A Time to Reflect

Jim Greer
USFWS - Chief, Wildlife and Sport
Fish Programs

I don't know about you, but I generally like anniversaries. Some anniversaries you might like better than others, that's true. But I think this anniversary, the 70th anniversary of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, is certainly one worth celebrating. For my part, I want to celebrate it by sharing with you some of my thoughts about where we came from and why we exist today.

I believe no other single program in the United States that can claim the contributions to fish and wildlife conservation than can the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Program (WR) and its younger sibling, the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Program (SFR) which is only 57 years old. A lot of money has changed hands since 1937 to the tune of over \$5 billion from excise taxes collected from the sale of hunting equipment alone. Where did it go? Directly to State Fish and Wildlife agencies to turn the tables for many hunted species that were sitting precariously on the brink of extinction. As regulations based on new scientific principles were established and enforced, the WR sent money to do habitat recovery work and give critters like deer, elk, beaver, and waterfowl and others a safe haven and a place to rebuild their populations to long-term sustainable levels. To date, over 418 million acres of habitat are being managed and protected in perpetuity across the country for these species and the myriad of other animal and bird species that depend on these same wetlands, uplands, and forested areas to survive. Their numbers have rebounded incredibly from their former levels. Although some species continue to have difficulties sustaining their numbers due to their special habitat requirements, I believe it's safe to say that over time, there would have been even more political and biological gridlock had these areas not been protected through the Wildlife Restoration projects.

End of story? Only if you turn your head away from what has now gained national attention regarding the health of our country's landscapes and the need for people, especially kids, to have a personal connection to nature for their own well-being. The constant pressure of housing and economic development

along with our increased reliance on technology has weakened the connection many Americans feel with nature, and their health is declining because of it. Or better put, we no longer have that natural place to go to as we once did as kids, to down-shift from the increasing pressures of daily life. Richard Louv's book, *Last Child in the Woods*, describes the phenomenon of "nature deficit disorder" in today's kids. There is a growing awareness of the need for places where people can take their kids to revel in the wonders of nature and get recharged physically and mentally. Our Wildlife Restoration projects along with other conservation projects are just the ticket.

Like anything that is 70 years old, it can seem more difficult to keep the program going and accomplishing things than when it was 20 or 30 years old. Fewer new acres of extensive landscape are being protected for wildlife under WR these days. But those same natural places that were protected in the 1940's and 50's are still there. The excise tax funds are being used to maintain and improve the lands purchased back then as they become increasingly surrounded by development and their management needs include addressing the detrimental impacts of invasive species and competing land uses. Caring for our country's wildlife and protecting local places for people (and especially kids) to really be outside is a legacy of the Wildlife Restoration program. It's an important one to maintain.

What about anniversaries? They provide a time to reflect on where we've been and where we intend to go. The WR program has matured over the years and it has its associated aches and pains. There is a bit of nonchalance about it as if it would be here forever and we don't need to worry about continued funding. In fact, the WR and SFR programs have been whittled away somewhat unceremoniously by some that may be new to these excise tax programs and driven more by the company bottom-line than the legacy these programs have created over the years. This very legacy will provide for the sales of hunting and fishing equipment as long as the wildlife resources are healthy and available to the public. So why blame the bottom-line folks? The torch-bearers

of these programs are long gone and the average hunter and fisherman have little awareness that their equipment purchases carry an excise tax passed down to them by manufacturers; manufacturers who are trying to survive in a highly competitive industry. I thank these industry folks for keeping the partnership alive. I think we all owe industry a heart-felt "Thank You" for maintaining a partnership so important to our futures and to the future of wildlife in America.

Seventy years ago, and after a couple of false starts, some visionary leaders within the hunting community, equipment manufacturers, Congress, State and Federal agencies, and conservationists started a program that today shows incredible accomplishments and sustained performance. It is due to their foresight, dedication, team approach and willingness to form partnerships based on mutual goals that made it all happen. Now, more than ever, those stepping into new leadership positions in the organizations representing those earlier team players must be willing to maintain the legacy. Our country's fish and wildlife resources are depending on it. Thank goodness for anniversaries!



Jim Greer is the Chief of the Wildlife and Sport Fish programs located in Arlington, VA and is retiring in April 2007. It's his 32 anniversary of State and Federal Fish and Wildlife agency service. / USFWS

Acronyms

AFWA	Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
ALAB	American League of Anglers and Boaters
ARTF	Aquatic Resource Trust Fund
ASA	American Sportfishing Association
ASD	Appraisal Services Directorate
CEO	Corporate Executive Officer
CVA	Clean Vessel Act
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
DOI	Department of Interior
ESDF	Easton Sports Development Foundation
FA	Federal Assistance (Aid)
FIDTA	Fondation Internationale de Developpement du Tir A L'Arc (International Archery Foundation)
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service
Inc.	Incorporation
KDPW	Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
LIP	Landowner Incentive Program
MSCGP	Multi-State Conservation Grant Program
NAAT	National Advisory Acceptance Team
NASP	National Archery in the Schools Program
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGO	Non-government Organization
NWTF	National Wild Turkey Federation
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
SFR	Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson Act)
SHPO	State Historical Preservation Office
SWG	State Wildlife Grants
T&E	Threatened and Endangered
U. S.	United States
USFWS	U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WR	Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson Act)

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (CWCP) **(State) Wildlife Action Plan**

Staff Directory - Federal Assistance

Washington Office

Main Phone Number (703) 358-2156
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_9

Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs
Rowan Gould

Deputy Assistant Director for Migratory Birds and Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
Pam Matthes

Division Chief
Jim Greer
(703) 358-2484
Jim_Greer@fws.gov

Branch Chief – Budget and Administration
Vacant

Branch Chief – Information and Management
Lori Bennett
(703) 358-2033
Lori_Bennett@fws.gov

Branch Chief – Grants Operation and Policy
Tom Barnes
(703) 358-1815
Thomas_Barnes@fws.gov

Acting Branch Chief – Audits
Ord Bagerstock
(703) 358-1841
Ord_Bargerstock@fws.gov

Branch Chief – Surveys
Sylvia Cabrera
(703) 358-1842
Sylvia_Cabrera@fws.gov

Branch Chief – FAIMS
Luther Zachary
(303) 275-2342
Luther_Zachary@fws.gov
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_9_FAIMS

Branch Chief – Training
Steve Leggans
(304) 876-7463
Steve_Leggans@fws.gov
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_9_NCTC

Regional Offices

Region 1 (AS, CA, MP, GU, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA)
Fred Caslick, Chief Federal Assistance
Fred_Caslick@fws.gov
(503) 231-6128
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_1

Region 2 (AZ, NM, OK, TX)
Joyce Johnson, Chief Federal Assistance
Joyce_Johnson@fws.gov
(505) 248-7450
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_2

Region 3 (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI)
Robert Bryant, Chief Federal Assistance
Robert_Bryant@fws.gov
(612) 713-5130
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_3

Region 4 (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, VI)
Mike Piccirilli, Chief Federal Assistance
Mike_Piccirilli@fws.gov
(404) 679-4159
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_4

Region 5 (CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV)
John Organ, Chief Federal Assistance
John_Organ@fws.gov
(413) 253-8508
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_5

Region 6 (CO, KS, MT, ND, NE, SD, UT, WY)
Dave McGillivary, Chief Federal Assistance
David_McGillivary@fws.gov
(303) 236-4411
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_6

Region 7 (AK)
Tim Hess, Chief Federal Assistance
Tim_Hess@fws.gov
(907) 786-3545
http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#REGION_7

CNO (CA, NV)
Laura Valoppi, Chief Federal Assistance
Laura_Valoppi@fws.gov
(916) 414-6509
<http://federalaid.fws.gov/info/admin/farodir.html#CNO>

United States Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Federal Assistance
4401 N. Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203
<http://federalasst.fws.gov/>

