



The U.S. Caribbean Fish and Aquatic Conservation Initiative

The USFWS Caribbean Ecological Services Field Office's Fish and Aquatic Conservation Initiative focuses on the conservation, restoration and enhancement of aquatic habitats. The initiative's projects are intended to benefit focal native species by augmenting the species abundance and available habitat, and maintaining stable populations and habitat suitability. These actions also benefit public health, safety and recreation.

Goals

- Identify aquatic needs in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands and use best approaches to address them by the development of strategic planning;
- Implement conservation actions for high priority species such as the at-risk Sirajo goby and American eel;
- Restore and enhance aquatic habitats via the removal or modification of physical barriers (e.g. dams), replacement or modification of stream-crossing structures (e.g. culverts, bridges) and construction of fish ladders;
- Rehabilitate stream banks;
- Enhance recreational fisheries and educate and engage the public in aquatic resources and our conservation mission;
- Build partnerships with state, government and other federal agencies and NGOs to successfully implement aquatic restoration projects in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Projects

- Aquatic Habitat Connectivity Initiative. The main purpose of this initiative is to provide baseline data on the biotic assemblages and physicochemical parameters upstream and downstream of riverine barriers to show the assemblage-level effects of removal of a stream barrier, or enhancement of river connectivity by the construction of a fish passage.
- Georeferenced database of stream crossing structures. The main purpose of this project is to promote the use of a standardized protocol developed by the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) to assess stream crossing structures prioritizing their removal and/or modification to improve stream connectivity for the benefit of the aquatic fauna and ecosystem integrity.

- Outreach. We focus on the development of outreach/educational materials to promote aquatic conservation and restoration actions and measures to improve aquatic connectivity in aquatic ecosystems.

For More Information

- Visit the Service's National Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program website: <https://www.fws.gov/fisheries/>
- Visit the Caribbean Ecological Services website: <https://www.fws.gov/caribbean/es/>

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Related Links

Southeast Aquatic Resources
Partnership: <http://southeastaquatics.net/>

National Fish Habitat Partnership:
<http://www.fishhabitat.org/>

