

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT SCHEDULED

A symposium aimed at developing classification systems for the Nation's varied fish and wildlife habitats will be sponsored by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, January 24-27, 1977, in Phoenix, Arizona.

Federal, State, and local agencies concerned with the management of wildlife resources, as well as conservation groups and research institutions have long been hampered in the decisionmaking process by the absence of uniform nomenclature for fish and wildlife habitat.

For example, although there are dozens of different types of grasslands, each with its own characteristic soil, terrain, and plant and animal mix, the word has widely different meanings to people in various parts of the country. Furthermore, some agencies have developed their own habitat classification systems which are inconsistent with those used by other agencies. The symposium will focus on this problem and the need to produce a systematic, ecologically-based classification system for fish and wildlife habitat and for the methodology to inventory and assess that habitat.

Once developed, such a system would be similar in organization to the scientific nomenclature used by governments, organizations, and scientists throughout the world to identify plant and animal species.

The symposium, "Classification, Inventory, and Analysis of Fish and Wildlife Habitat," is being sponsored in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Soil Conservation Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, the American Institute of Biological Sciences, the Wildlife Management Institute, the Sport Fishing Institute, and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

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This meeting is a first step toward recognizing the needs of the various interest groups, assessing the state-of-the art, and producing a system which will satisfy users' needs. Sessions will be devoted to presentations discussing needs of the users, approaches to classification, determination of ecological relationships between fish and wildlife species and their habitat, and methodology for inventory and data management. The proceedings will be published.

Registration materials and additional information on the program may be obtained by contacting Susan Sasfy, METREK, a Division of the MITRE Corporation, 1820 Dolley Madison Boulevard, McLean, Virginia 22101, telephone 703/790-6450. Contact for program content and technical liaison is Dr. Allan Marmelstein, Office of Biological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, telephone 202/343-8032.

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