

Sam D. Hamilton

Regional Director



Sam D. Hamilton is the Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Region, headquartered Atlanta, Georgia. A native of Mississippi and a career employee of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, he provides vision and leadership for Service activities in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. He also oversees the management of 125 national wildlife refuges covering more than 3.5 million acres, 14 national fish hatcheries, five fishery assistance offices, and 16 ecological services field offices.

As Regional Director, he oversees the Service's role in the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem, including the Everglades, and also is responsible for an increasing number of habitat conservation plans in the Southeast. These plans are voluntary agreements between the Service and landowners that permit economic development to continue on private lands while conserving threatened and endangered species.

Hamilton was named Southeast Regional Director on October 7, 1997. Hamilton spearheads a renewed commitment to the Region's national wildlife refuges — public lands that provide a multitude of benefits to wildlife and people — and its national fish hatcheries, which play a key role in managing the Nation's fisheries and aquatic resources. What's more, he plays a leading role in the development and growth of the Service's carbon sequestration program.

No newcomer to the Service's Southeast Region, Sam is one of only eight regional directors nationwide.

Before becoming Regional Director, he served as the Geographical Assistant Regional Director for Area II, a senior policy advisor to the Regional Director on endangered species, wetlands conservation and habitat restoration. He provided leadership for a broad array of Service programs dealing with conservation biology and natural resource management throughout Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. He also oversaw the management of 34 national wildlife refuges, five national fish hatcheries, and six ecological services field offices in these states.

“My greatest challenge is to help bring conservationists, hunters, anglers, landowners, state and federal agencies, and business people together to help us conserve and enhance what makes America great — our treasured wildlife resources,” said Hamilton. **“I am blessed with the opportunity to serve America with such a fine group of people, committed to a deeply meaningful mission, and in such a great place and time.”**

He served a stint as the Southeast's Assistant Regional Director-Ecological Services, overseeing the management of the Region's 16 ecological services field offices. The Ecological Services Program is responsible for implementation of the Endangered Species Act and Service activities associated with the Clean Water Act wetland and coastal programs, Federal water resource development programs, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program and the environmental contaminants program.

Prior to coming to Atlanta, he served as the Service's Texas State Administrator, headquartered in Austin, Texas, where he was responsible for overseeing implementation of the Endangered Species Act and other environmental statutes. He served four years in Washington, D.C., as special assistant to the Service's Director and Deputy Director, spent time in the Division of Habitat Conservation, and completed a detail on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee in the House of Representatives. He served another seven years of his Service career in Mississippi and Alabama.

He was the recipient of the Alabama Wildlife Federation's 1986 Water Conservationist of the Year Award for efforts to restore historic river flows and fisheries to the Coosa River. Sam's career in conservation began with his early experience in the Youth Conservation Corps at Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge in Mississippi. He is a native of Starkville, Mississippi, and a 1977 graduate of Mississippi State University. He and his wife, Becky, a native of Jackson, have two sons, Sam and Clay. They have a grandson, Davis. He enjoys the outdoors and is an avid hunter and angler.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of the American people.



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