

Southeast Regional Science Committee
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Annual Update
December 2017

The Southeast Regional Science Committee (Science Committee) facilitates science communication and coordination among U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) employees. As a federal natural resource management and regulatory agency, we use science as a foundation for our conservation work. Science-based conservation requires Service employees have timely access to:

- Scientific research, information, and state-of-the-art scientific tools
- Peer interaction among scientific colleagues inside and outside the Service
 - Science-based conservation strategies for habitat and population management
- Training and mentoring opportunities in:
 - Understanding, applying, and communicating complex scientific concepts and information
 - Building awareness of appropriate practices and procedures when engaging in science activities, such as conducting research, study design, management implications, seeking peer review, and distributing scientific information

To facilitate science communication and coordination, the Science Committee connects Service employees with scientific expertise and information across the Region through:

- Forums and opportunities for people with similar challenges to connect
- Illustrating the role of science in the Service for different job series
- Demonstrating applied science for decision support and integration and coordination of science within the Service
- Providing points of contact for access to science expertise and science information
- Ensuring easy access to interim and final progress reports for research funded with Service funds (e.g., flex funds, Section 6 funds) or with USGS SSP funds

The Science Committee works to help Service employees achieve the following competencies:

- Know what research, conservation strategies, and other science-based work Service biologists are conducting or incorporating into their resource management actions
- Understand what is meant by Service science culture
- Consistently communicate Service science expertise and science information needs internally and to partners

FY17 Accomplishments

In fiscal year 2017, the Science Committee focused on two areas:

1. Helping to get the science webpages (<https://www.fws.gov/southeast/science/>) up and fully functional
2. Making science information accessible to Service staff

The following was accomplished in relation to those priorities:

We contributed to the Regional Science webpages and provided a “Face” to the Science Committee and a landing place for people interested in finding out about science in the Service.

We completed some behind the scenes projects to help get information more available to Service staff including identifying and discussing how we might help “serve” science information from a number of efforts (see below) to Service staff.

- SSP/QR- Created entries in Science Base for all projects funded since 2000 and linked to the Science webpage (<https://www.fws.gov/southeast/science/science-support-partnership/projects/> and <https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/items?q=sspqr%20fwsr4>)
- Considered how we could facilitate access to project reports for nine categories of projects
 - Aquatic Invasive Species projects- enter into Science Base in FY18
 - Partners for Fish and Wildlife- Much is already in ECOS and it is primarily habitat delivery so not really within the scope of what we are focusing on.
 - State Wildlife Action Grants- On hold for the moment as we get some of the other more defined efforts accessible as examples.
 - Section 6 projects- Assist the Regional Section 6 coordinator in getting the information into ServCat in FY18
 - Section 10 projects- Explore what this would take in FY18
 - Inventory and Monitoring- This information is being entered into ServCat by the I&M program we should link to this from the Science webpage.
 - LCC projects- LCCs are in the process of organizing this information. We will link to what they produce.
 - Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit projects- possible FY18
 - NRDA monitoring and research- On hold as this is a very complex category. Revisit at the end of FY18

FY18 Work Plan

In fiscal year 2018, the Science Committee will be focusing on the following areas:

1. National Science Awards as a mechanism for understanding and communicating Service science activities
 - a. Review and make recommendations for FY17 awards
 - b. Facilitate more nominations for FY18 awards
2. Making science information accessible to Service staff
 - a. Aquatic Invasive Species projects- enter into Science Base
 - b. Section 6 projects- Assist the Regional Section 6 coordinator in getting the information into ServCat
 - c. Section 10 projects- Explore what this would take
3. Help Service staff connect with Science expertise and networks in Region 4
 - a. Create a “who you gonna call” resource list
 - i. Communities of Practice (SDM, SSA, Floodplain Network, Conservation Genetics, Water Resources, GOM Avian Monitoring Network, etc.)
 - ii. FWS mailing lists
 - iii. Regional Subject Matter Expert Directory? Example - [HDgov FWS Resource Portal](#) - click on the *Expert Directory* link on the right side of the page and login using your Active Directory username and password (or just [click here](#))
 - b. Do planned, regular communications about ongoing Science using the website, RDT notes, email, E-Grits, webinars and other communication mechanisms

Southeast Regional Science Committee Members:

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