



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240



In Reply Refer To:
FWS/IRTM/ 064694

Memorandum

To: Associate Chief Information Officer,
Information Resources and Technology Management (IRTM)

From: Assistant Director-Ecological Services

Subject: Designation of Data Steward

Purpose: The purpose of this memorandum is to designate John Swords, ECOS System Manager, USFWS HQ Ecological Services as Data Steward for the proposed Service standard identified below:

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Spatial Data Specifications

Data Steward's Duties: John Swords will perform the following duties as Data Steward:

- Guide the USFWS HCP data standard through appropriate process and procedure for standards development;
- Prepare the draft data standard (a contractor will be assigned to complete writing of standard);
- In consultation with HCP data standards development team, provide advice on the proper use of the data and the standard;
- Review comments on the data standard that result from the review process and modify the standard if necessary (a contractor will be assigned to update standard based on review comments);
- Review the data standard periodically to ensure its usefulness and accuracy; Modify and reissue the data standard as necessary.

Rationale: The data and GIS components of HCPs have received little institutional attention or guidance resulting in inconsistencies in the quality and availability of data products. Consequently, each field office or even each field biologist has developed their own data management practices driven by their level of understanding, interest, and applicants' ability and willingness to collaborate on data aspects of each project. This directly impacts the GIS and data deliverables associated with each HCP project including: data design, development, management, analyses (*e.g.* assess impacts or plan effectiveness at the landscape scale), increased costs, documentation, and data sharing.

The current unstructured data/GIS approach of HCPs across USFWS reduces USFWS's capacity to assess impacts from many individual efforts and piece together effective reserves. There is a compelling need to ensure that the science and analytical framework used to develop HCPs will be supported through high-quality HCP informatics deliverables.

If you have any questions concerning the proposed data standard, please contact: John Swords, ECOS System Manager, USFWS HQ Ecological Services at 970-266-2991 or by email at John_Swords@fws.gov.

cc: National Data Administrator