



## Fisheries & Habitat Conservation



### Key Partners:

- U.S. Forest Service
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- University of Georgia
- University of North Carolina
- The Nature Conservancy
- Southeastern Aquatic Resources Partnership
- Corp of Engineers
- Trout Unlimited



USFWS photos.

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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# Celebrating Habitat in Georgia

- The Project Planning Program is collaborating with partners regarding the Corp of Engineer's proposal to remove City Mills and Eagle-Phoenix dams at Columbus. Removal of these small dams would restore 21 miles of mainstem Chattahoochee River, including about 3 miles of shoal habitat. The removals would provide improved habitat conditions for resident fish such as shoal bass, American eel and striped bass and potential passage of Gulf sturgeon and Alabama shad if the downstream dam (Woodruff) is retrofitted to provide fish passage.
- The Service is working with partners to remove or bypass 27 fish passage barriers in interjurisdictional water to open 224 miles of stream habitats benefiting at least 30 listed and recreational species.
- The Environmental Contaminants Program specializes in Clean Water Act reviews, performing 1,404 from 2002 to 2004. Technical assistance was also provided to USEPA on the wildlife effects of toxic materials at three of the state's largest Superfund sites.
- The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program has engaged in 33 habitat improvement projects, with 2,781 acres of habitat improved in 2004.
- The Service spearheaded an ongoing effort to map out a conservation strategy for the Tallapoosa Basin, which supports a listed mussel and six endemic fish and crayfish. This project involves numerous partners.
- The Service initiated surveys in the Etowah River, which supports 4 listed and many rare species, to identify sediment sources, prioritize sites for restoration, and investigate how stream geomorphology, instream habitat, and aquatic fauna change from the River's headwaters to Lake Allatoona.
- The Service spearheaded the creation of the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP), which is comprised of State and Federal partnerships that extend beyond the traditional boundaries of resource management agencies. It has established commitments by State fishery resource agencies, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and representation from the coastal Councils and Commissions to work for the benefit of the resource. The SARP now has 16 signatories, including the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.
- The Service is evaluating methods of controlling the further spread of the Asian rice (swamp) eel and is collaborating with affected state and federal natural resource managers and other partners.
- The Aquatic Nuisance Species Program has provided technical assistance to National Wildlife Refuges and worked with Georgia Department of Natural Resources to respond rapidly to eradicate isolated infestations of Giant salvinia, an invasive aquatic plant currently spreading in waters of southern-tier states.
- The Service is involved in the restoration and recovery of the Robust Redhorse sucker. The Robust Redhorse Conservation Committee was established—a consensus group with the goal of restoring the fish in the waters of Georgia, South



Harris Neck NWR  
Photo by J. and K. Hollingsworth

Carolina and North Carolina. The Committee has thirteen signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding with more than sixty parties interested in the restoration.

- Warm Springs Regional Fisheries Center is engaged in joint research with the University of North Carolina on the development of a vaccine against digenetic trematodes infesting aquaculture facilities in the Southeast.
- Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery produces one million trout for mitigation of fisheries below Federal water developments, and works with partners to complete tasks to recover 4 listed fish species. The hatchery also outreaches to thousands with information on watershed protection and habitat conservation.

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