



Fisheries
& Habitat
Conservation



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Celebrating Habitat in Boqueron, Puerto Rico

- **Fishway on the Culibrinas River** — Ecological Services worked with Fisheries, Puerto Rico Aqueducts and Sewer Authority, and the Corps of Engineers on the funding and design of a fishway on the Margarita Dam on the Culibrinas River in northwest Puerto Rico. The Margarita Dam is an old sugar mill diversion structure (the mill was shut down several years ago). The fishway provides passage of native fish and shrimp species and will provide passage from the ocean, through the estuary, and above the dam 3 miles upstream of the ocean.
- **Puerto Rico** — The Environmental Contaminants Program conducted 105 consultations for the protection of endangered species under the Clean Water Act from 2002 to 2004. The program participated in eight oil and hazardous material spill drills during this period, and responded to three spills on National Wildlife Refuges.
- **Puerto Rico** — Service personnel provide regular spill response training in the USVI and Puerto Rico to keep local responders ready for the highest quality response to a spill and to instruct responders on how to focus on natural resource protection during an event.
- **Boqueron, Puerto Rico Field Office** — The Culibrinas River fishway has been installed and operates over a range of flows. The project should restore over 70 miles of river habitat to native migratory fish and shrimp species. The project involved a number of Federal and Commonwealth agencies, including the Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Geological Survey, the Puerto Rico Aqueducts and Sewers Authority, the Commonwealth Authority for Financing Infrastructure, the University of Puerto Rico and a number of agency consultants. All costs of the fishway construction and advance hydrological monitoring were covered by the Commonwealth. A small amount of Coastal Program funds covered the costs of bringing Mr. Rizzo, a fishway engineer, down to the island. Baseline studies of the river fauna above and below the dam were covered by the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), Mayaguez Campus Biology Department through a Service funded flex funding proposal to Fisheries. Follow-up studies on the fishway efficiency are expected from UPR.
- The Service has been reviewing a major deep water super post-Panamax port development proposal for the south coast of Puerto Rico. The original proposal called for major impacts in two south coast bays that would have involved approximately 200 acres of impacts to mangroves, mudflats, and seagrass beds, as well as potential impacts to the Antillean manatee. After a thorough review process the least environmentally damaging alternative was chosen, and compensatory mitigation will consist of the acquisition of a 693 acre coastal farm consisting of 427 acres of mangrove and herbaceous wetlands, 51 acres of open water, 100 acres of salt flats, and 42 acres of uplands (consisting of the narrow sand spit between the wetlands and the sea). Restoration and enhancement will include reforestation and possibly some hydrological restoration.
- **Enighed Pond** — St. John, USVI does not have any adequate port facility. This island which is 2/3 National Park does not have an airport and all transport is via ferry. The Service in along with Federal Highways and VI Ports Authority, worked cooperatively in reviewing the proposed port facilities at Enighed Pond. The Service's input helped reduce the area of impact, develop a mitigation plan that resulted in the relocation of hundreds of individual coral colonies out of the area proposed navigation channel and the creation of mangrove wetlands in the port facility.

Healthy Fish and Wildlife ~ ~ Healthy Habitat ~ ~ Healthy People ~ ~ Healthy Economy