U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Raleigh

Ecological Services Field Office

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Photos (top to bottom)

Our field presence enables quick response; a biologist tracks dissolved oxygen levels in local stream following a wastewater spill resulting in a fish kill.

We work with private land owners and other partners to restore rare habitats like this Atlantic white cedar forest.

We provide assistance and guidance to the natural resource specialists at Fort Bragg and other installations; enabling them to manage endangered species like red-cockaded woodpeckers while accomplishing the mission of military readiness.

Station Facts

- Established: 1955.
- FY 05 budget: $1,686,000.
- Staff: 15.

Station Goals

- Conserve, protect and enhance Federal trust resources and their habitats including National Wildlife Refuges, wetlands, endangered species, migratory birds and interjurisdictional fishes.
- Implement recovery and Section 7 consultation activities for 45 federally listed endangered and threatened species in North Carolina.
- Restore wetlands and other rare or diminishing habitats on private and public lands.
- Investigate, prevent and remediate effects of environmental pollution to maximize quality habitat for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service trust resources.

Services provided to

- Private citizens.
- Federal and state agency clientele seeking Federal or state approvals.
- Local governments and community groups.
- Other U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service entities.

Activity Highlights

- Annually review over 3,000 federally funded, licensed or permitted projects for impacts on fish and wildlife resources.
- Assist military bases such as Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune with the conservation of threatened and endangered species (the red-cockaded woodpecker and others) while maintaining their mission of national security.
- Accomplish habitat enhancement and restoration on private lands (over 4,200 acres at 85 sites between 1988-1999) through programs such as Partners for Fish and Wildlife.
- Through the Environmental Contaminants Program:

  Assist in the recovery of the endangered Cape Fear Shiner (a freshwater fish) and the Carolina Heelsplitter (a freshwater mussel) by assessing their sensitivity to pollution and the quality of their habitats.

  Investigate the health of, and pollution impacts to brown pelicans, common loons, ospreys and royal terns in coastal North Carolina.

  Foster wise management of water resources in the Lower Roanoke River through assessment of water quality and the causes of recurrent fish kills.

- Through the Service's Coastal Program:

  Increase anadromous fish stocks through the restoration of spawning habitat (as with the removal of Quaker Neck Dam on the Neuse River and the installation of fish passage devices on the Lower Cape Fear River and at Lake Mattamuskeet).

  Restore approximately 300 acres of wetlands annually, prioritized on their ability to improve water quality in the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuary.

  Conduct outreach efforts aimed at informing the public about vital estuarine resources and the influence of private citizens on living resources.

Questions and Answers

Why does the Service oppose the construction of a Dual Jetty System at Oregon Inlet, Dare County, North Carolina?

The dual jetty system would be built upon public land within the Department of Interior's Cape Hatteras National Seashore and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge along North Carolina's Outer Banks; a location recognized by many as a national treasure.

The project area is located on very dynamic barrier islands where landscape features change in response to the forces of winds and waves. The project would seek to stabilize the inlet, and thus would eliminate the ability of the area to respond to these natural forces. It would require the implementation of a massive annual sand bypassing operation to prevent severe erosion of beaches within several miles of the inlet.

This massive engineering project would convert Interior lands in the vicinity of the inlet into a construction zone. Once in place, the management authority of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service would be subordinated to the operation of the jetties and sand bypassing.

Annual placement of massive amounts of sand on the beach will displace nesting by the federally listed loggerhead sea turtle and piping plover. Nesting habitat on the beach and nearby dunes for other shorebirds would be rendered unsuitable. Beach invertebrates, an important wildlife food source, would be seriously impacted, if not destroyed; and the highly regarded recreational surf fishing would be harmed.

Blockage and diversion of sand that would normally be carried into Pamlico Sound will result in the loss and degradation of sound-side habitats, including tidal marshes, mud- and sandflats, and sea grass beds. Although the issue remains unresolved, the jetties could block the passage of larval marine fishes from migrating into essential nursery areas in Pamlico Sound.

At tremendous expense to the nation and with irreversible impacts to the local environment, the Manteo Shallowbag Bay Project would attempt to "lock in place" dynamic natural processes, the effectiveness of which cannot be predicted.

Why is the Service concerned with the operation of hydroelectric facilities?

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issues licenses to impound public trust waters to allow production of electricity. The Service works with the FERC and the power producers to minimize impacts to public fish and wildlife resources. Service concerns include management of fish and wildlife habitat within the project area including reservoir shorelines, minimum flows to protect the aquatic ecosystem downstream from dams, safe and effective fish passage around the projects for migratory fishes, and fish mortality associated with the operation of the projects.

What is the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) and what is the Service involvement in the process?

In 1982, Congress passed the Coastal Barrier Resources Act to address problems caused by coastal barrier development. The CBRA restricted Federal expenditures and financial assistance, including Federal flood insurance, in the Coastal Barrier Resources System, a defined set of undeveloped coastal areas along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts.

Three important goals of CBRA are to:

1) minimize loss of human life by discouraging development in high-risk areas.

2) reduce wasteful expenditure of Federal resources.

3) protect the natural resources associated with coastal barriers.

Since the devastating hurricane strikes to the North Carolina coast in 1996 and the floods of 1999 in the coastal plain, the Raleigh Field Office has been consulting with Federal agencies, especially the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other state and local authorities. Currently the Service is working with Dare County, the state and private surveyors to clarify system boundaries and to provide this information to the public.

Is the management of endangered species on military bases impacting our national security?

The Department of Defense (DOD) manages its lands for fish and wildlife including endangered species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service participates with DOD through the Endangered Species Act, Section 7 consultation process. Endangered species management plans allow for the continued existence of the species without sacrificing national security readiness. This collaborative process has been particularly successful at Fort Bragg, where DOD is effectively managing one of the nation's densest populations of red-cockaded woodpeckers while continuing to conduct intensive training maneuvers.