



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/DCR (002680)

JUL 23 2001

Memorandum

To: All Employees

From: **Acting Deputy**
Director

Subject: Implementing Congress' Amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

In October 1992, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the Federal Government, was amended to replace the term "handicap" with "disability." Using "disability" rather than "handicap" is a matter of respect for the estimated 54 million persons with disabilities.

It is Service policy to ensure that official terminology is in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its amendments. All Service correspondence, publications and signage must use the term "disability" rather than "handicap." Please make the necessary corrections when ordering or reprinting Service publications, preparing letters, or creating signage. Also, ensure that the term "handicap" is not used in verbal or e-mail communications. No costs need to be incurred to replace existing signage for this purpose alone.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact Pat L. Smith, Acting Chief, Division of Diversity and Civil Rights, at (703) 358-1724.