

Region 3 Fisheries Program

Report and Publication Policy

July 2006



Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region
Fisheries Program

Approved 
Assistant Regional Director – Fisheries
Date: _____

Report Publication Policy

- 1.1 Purpose. The purpose of this policy is to provide consistent guidance to all Region 3 Fisheries personnel on preparation, review, printing and dissemination of the primary reports we prepare. This policy is intended to:
1. Ensure product quality.
 2. Ensure timely product publication.
 3. Ensure format consistency in product production
 4. Delegate responsibility for reports to the lowest grade level possible.
- 2.1 Scope. This policy is to be followed by personnel within the Fisheries program. **The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Manual Part 121, is the authoritative reference for the Service's printing and publication policy.**
- 2.2 This policy covers all reports based on field or laboratory studies conducted by Fisheries personnel.
- 2.3 This policy does not cover field and trip reports and reports that are routinely required which will not be distributed outside the Service (e.g. annual reports), or any publication created specifically or primarily for distribution to the general public (e.g. station newsletters, brochures, etc.). Additionally, this policy does not cover contract completion reports which have specific reporting requirements or may contain privileged information not intended for wide distribution.
- 3.1 Policy. The Service's policy is to publish and disseminate information that furthers the achievement of the Service's mission. For the Region 3 Fisheries Program, all field and laboratory studies shall be published and disseminated in at least one of six outlets: *Region 3 Fisheries Data Series, Region 3 Fisheries Progress Report, Region 3 Fisheries Technical Report, Region 3 Fisheries Management Plan*, scientific journals, and books. All reports will be appropriately reviewed before publication and must conform to Service requirements for policy review, technical review, editorial review, and graphics review. Reports in the Data Series and Management Plans are not peer reviewed, whereas those in the Progress Report and Technical Report series are peer reviewed. Publication should generally occur before the next field season begins.
- 4.1 Definitions. The types and purposes of reports covered by this policy include:
- A. *Region 3 Fisheries Data Series.* This report series is established to provide timely dissemination of data to local managers. Data analyses are minimal and data interpretation is limited to recommendations for future data collection efforts. Service policy issues are not addressed in this report series. Data Series Reports do not enter a peer review process.
 - B. *Region 3 Fisheries Progress Report.* This report series is established to report scientific findings of multi-year studies on an annual basis. In general, most of the scientific data collected is analyzed statistically, and the relevance of the results is discussed in the report. Service policy issues can be addressed.
 - C. *Region 3 Fisheries Management Plan.* This series would be reserved for development of fishery management plans produced for National Wildlife Refuges and other federal lands. The plans are treated similarly to Fisheries Data Series in that they receive adequate technical editing in office of origin, so they do not require additional peer review.

D. Region 3 Fisheries Technical Report. This report series is to publish scientific findings from single- or multi-year studies. All scientific data is statistically analyzed, and the relevance of the results is discussed in detail (i.e. management implications). Service policy issues can be addressed.

E. Scientific Journals. Original research and studies that result in new scientific knowledge are generally published in scientific journals. This includes studies that provide new insights or applications for fisheries management. Service employees are encouraged to publish their results in the peer-reviewed scientific literature. Formats and standards are set by the individual journals. Articles submitted to scientific journals do not undergo peer review within the Region.

F. Book chapters. Results of original research, or syntheses of research or management evaluations. Articles published in peer-reviewed books do not undergo peer review within the Region.

5.1 Responsibilities. Publication responsibilities within the Region 3 Fisheries program are as follows:

A. Assistant Regional Director - Fisheries.

- (1) Ensure timely dissemination of quality reports by field stations.
- (2) Evaluate performance of Project Leaders and Regional Fisheries Publications Coordinator in achieving report publication goals.
- (3) Ensure policy review is conducted when a publication contains elements that may imply or reflect official Service policy.

B. Project Leaders.

- (1) Ensure principal investigators meet reporting requirements and deadlines.
- (2) Ensure all reports receive appropriate review for technical merit, editorial content, and graphics before the manuscript is forwarded to Regional Editorial Board.
- (3) Notify the Assistant Regional Director - Fisheries of policy implications, if any.
- (4) Ensure peer review comments are reconciled by principal investigators.
- (5) Ensure publications are printed and distributed in a timely manner
- (6) Submit electronic copies of each report (including those completed prior to development of the policy) to the Publications Coordinator

C. Regional Fisheries Publications Coordinator.

- (1) Chair the Region 3 Fisheries Editorial Board.
- (2) Assign appropriate numbers to report series, journal articles, and book chapters..
- (3) Ensure standardized appearance is adhered to.
- (4) Forwards electronic copies of reports to the Regional webmaster for posting on our webpage.

D. Regional Editorial Board

- (1) Ensure quality, consistency in format, product appearance, and provide guidance for and ensure timely distribution on an annual basis.
- (2) Submit manuscript to peer reviewers along with guidance on the focus of technical review.
- (3) Prepares letters and supporting information for author containing the results of the peer review.
- (4) The board shall be represented by one representative from Regional Office (Fisheries) who will serve as the Regional Fisheries Publications Coordinator, and up to three representatives from the field stations.

6.1.1 Report Format. Biologists within the Fisheries program are responsible for preparing reports that describe the methods and results of field and laboratory studies. Unless an exception is granted by the Publications Coordinator, all reports should generally conform to the "Guide for Authors" of an American Fisheries Society (AFS) journal. By utilizing formats of the AFS, reports will be consistent among the various fishery offices. Scientific journal publications submitted to a non-AFS journal should comply with the "Guide for Authors" for the intended journal.

6.1.2 Appearance. The Region 3 Fisheries Editorial Board will agree upon a standardized cover format to be used for each of the four types of reports produced at the regional level on an annual basis to ensure consistency between offices.

6.2 Statistical Rigor. Principal investigators should ensure that draft reports are statistically sound.

6.3 Timeliness. Project Leaders should ensure that reports are drafted in a timely manner to ensure that reports are reviewed, reconciled, and published within the following timelines: Data Series and Progress Reports should be completed within six months of conclusion of field work; Management Plans should be completed within timelines identified by cooperators; and Technical Reports should be completed within one year of conclusion of field work. Although completion of publications submitted to peer-reviewed journals will be controlled to some degree by the journal's review process, authors should make every effort to have publication completed within eighteen months.

6.4 Use of Disclaimer Notices. A disclaimer notice must be used if:

- (a) The publication contains information that is contrary to established policies of the Service or for some reason certain uses of the publication would not be legally approved by the Department Solicitor. In this case the following disclaimer is recommended: "The opinions and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service."
- (b) The use of trade names or commercial products is required. In this case, the following disclaimer is recommended: "The mention of trade names or commercial products in this report does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use by the Federal government."
- (c) All *Region 3 Fisheries Data Series* reports must contain the following disclaimer: "The Fisheries Data Series was established in 2003 to provide public access to unpublished

study results. These reports are intended to document short-term field studies that are limited in or lacking statistical interpretation. Reports in this series receive limited internal review prior to release and may be finalized in more formal literature in the future. Consequently, these reports should not be cited without approval of the author or the Project Leader."

- 6.5 Nondiscrimination Clause. All publications, except for scientific journals, shall contain the following nondiscrimination clause: Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of race, religion, color, or physical or mental disability. For more information please contact:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Office for Equal Opportunity
1849 C. Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20240

- 6.6 Mission Statement. All publications and reports must contain the following mission statement: "The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people."

7.1 Review Procedures.

- A. Project Leaders are responsible for quality control/quality assurance on all draft publications leaving their office. All Fisheries reports and draft publications must receive adequate technical editing within the office of origin, prior to peer review, to assure: conformance to policy, correct use of the English language, and conformance to AFS format (or the intended outlet). Minimally staffed field stations may request technical editing from another field station prior to peer review.
- B. All copies of draft publications are to be double-spaced and clearly stamped "DRAFT".

- 7.2 Peer Review. For all reports and journal publications, a minimum of two independent peer reviews is required, including at least one review from outside the agency. Peer reviewers should provide feedback on only the technical merit of the work being reported. Although authors and supervisors are encouraged to take advantage of the expertise residing within Region 3, peer reviewers from outside the Region may be utilized. The primary criterion for selecting peer reviewers is scientific expertise. Editorial and graphic adequacies are the primary responsibility of the authors, then the project leader, and lastly of the Publications Coordinator. Manuscripts should be submitted to project leaders first for sign-off; those that do not meet the agreed upon standards are returned to the authors. Only when the Project Leader determines that the standards have been met will the report be sent to the editorial board for distribution for peer review. Authors and Project Leaders should provide recommendations for reviewer candidates.

- A. Time allowed for peer reviews will depend on the length and complexity of the report, and on applicable deadlines. Journal editors typically request that peer reviewers return manuscripts within 3-4 weeks.
- B. Consideration of the following subject areas by peer reviewers is recommended: technical adequacy; editorial adequacy; graphics adequacy; and policy conformance, if applicable.
- C. Reviewer's comments should be sent simultaneously to the Project Leader and the Principal Investigator to prevent process bottlenecks and response delays.
- D. The accountable supervisor is responsible for assuring appropriate attention is given to peer-reviewers' comments in the reconciled draft.

7.3 Policy Review.

- A. For reports where regional or national policy concerns are not discussed, the report is ready for printing and/or posting on the Region 3 Fisheries web site following reconciliation of the peer review comments. Project Leaders are advised to review each report carefully for sensitive management or policy issues; if in doubt, send it to the Assistant Regional Director - Fisheries for a policy review.
- B. For reports or manuscripts that discuss regional or national policy, the Project Leader will notify the Assistant Regional Director. In most cases, a policy review and briefing will be required. The Assistant Regional Director - Fisheries will work with the Coordinator to complete the approval. At the discretion of the Assistant Regional Director, reports may be forwarded to the Regional Director and Assistant Regional Director - External Affairs. The policy review should take no longer than three weeks. Highlighting of the sections requiring policy review may help expedite reviews.
- C. Reports with nationally significant policy implications will require Washington Office approval. The Project Leader should notify the Assistant Regional Director - Fisheries and provide a memorandum justifying the request. The memorandum must contain a short paragraph that includes the objectives or purpose of the publication and its fulfillment of part of the annual work plan or fulfillment of a mandate from Congress or other high authority. The value of the publication to various types of users would be helpful.

8.1 Printing Procedures. After reports are approved for printing, the Project Leader should request from the Coordinator a report number using the convention for internal reports or a contribution number for peer-reviewed journal publications as indicated in the table below. Report numbers will be incorporated into the front cover of the report, and contribution numbers should appear in the *Acknowledgements* section of articles and book chapters as “This is Contribution [P-Year-Serial] of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Region 3 Fisheries Program.” Two camera-ready originals of each Region 3 Fisheries Program Reports, and two reprints or the PDF file for journal articles and book chapters should be submitted to the Coordinator for dissemination.

Report Series	Numbering Format
Data Series	FDS - Year- serial number (will begin with 1 each year)
Progress Report	FPR –Year- serial number (will begin with 1 each year)
Management Plan	FMP –Year- serial number (will begin with 1 each year)
Technical Report	FTR –Year- serial number (will begin with 1 each year)
Journal article or book chapter	P-Year-serial number (will begin with 1 each year)

- A. To keep the Regional Directorate informed of the reports being published, an abstract of the Report or manuscript shall be forwarded to the Assistant Regional Director - Fisheries by the Coordinator, once the camera ready product is received for publication.
- B. With the exception of page charges for scientific journals, all printing that is not feasible to complete in-house is done through the Government Printing Office (GPO). No appropriated funds may be used to procure printing from any source other than GPO, unless a GPO Waiver has been issued prior to the expenditure of funds. The GPO Waiver is only granted for emergency situations (poor planning is not an emergency). Printing/duplicating services cannot be purchased on a Government Purchase Card (MasterCard) without first obtaining a GPO waiver number from the Region 3 Office of External Affairs. The Assistant Regional Director - External Affairs, or designated authority, can approve a GPO Waiver for projects that meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Emergency printing that is required to be completed in less than 48 hours,
- Black and white printing that costs less than \$1000, and
- Color printing that costs less than \$500.

If the project meets ALL of the above criteria, then you must contact the Assistant Regional Director – External Affairs, prior to obtaining any printing services or expending any funds. If the Assistant Regional Director - External Affairs determines the project meets the requirements, a GPO Waiver number will be issued.

To print reports using GPO, Project Leaders will submit a camera-ready copy of the report accompanied by an acquisition request.

9.1 Dissemination.

- A. Electronic versions (PDF format) of reports, journal articles and book chapters shall be posted on web sites established by the Regional Office, and the Field Station webpage will provide a link to it.
- B. By December 31 of each year, the Coordinator will compile a list of all Reports, peer-reviewed articles, and book chapters published by the Region 3 Fisheries program. The list will be disseminated to announce the availability of Region 3 Fisheries Program reports and publications.