

Project Planning

Balancing Sustainable Development with Fish and Wildlife Conservation



Fisheries & Habitat Conservation

Project Planning benefits people and natural resources by:

Streamlining and shortening the applicant planning and permitting processes.

Maximizing communication among natural resource agencies, groups, and individuals.

Maximizing project benefits for fish and wildlife.

Enhancing and restoring fish, wildlife and their habitats.

Ensuring clean water for drinking, swimming, fishing and boating.

Providing economic development projects that include benefits for fish and wildlife resources.



Above: Great blue heron. Planning can balance natural resource benefits and development. USFWS photo.

The nation's watersheds and aquatic resources are under ever-increasing pressures as the human population grows and requires more land and water to sustain itself. As the population grows, there is a proportional increase in demand for infrastructure such as roads, homes and recreational facilities. Important decisions are made concerning natural resources and the environment during the scoping, planning, and design stages of project development. These actions may include transportation projects, hydropower projects and wetlands permits.

Increases in water-related development create formidable challenges to the conservation of fish and wildlife and other aquatic resources. Visionary, interdisciplinary planning is the smart way to provide for sustainable development while keeping communities livable.

WHAT DOES THIS PROGRAM DO?

- Ensures that habitat important to fish and wildlife is taken into consideration at the earliest possible stages when designing development projects.
- Allows agencies and the public to work together amicably to accommodate societal growth while conserving fish and wildlife.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

- Participate in pre-development planning activities with other Federal agencies and the public.
- Provide technical assistance to the public developers, and Federal agencies to ensure that fish and wildlife resources and their public benefits are considered during planning.
- Identify opportunities to enhance fish and wildlife resources for public benefit while accomplishing other project purposes.
- Promote early U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service participation to benefit fish, wildlife and their habitats.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE ALREADY?

- Ensured environmentally sensitive development.
- Created public understanding of the benefits of natural landscapes.
- Identified alternative designs that accomplish project purposes while minimizing adverse impacts to fish and wildlife.

- Identified ways to compensate for unavoidable impacts.
- Facilitated compliance with environmental laws and regulations.

HOW DOES THE PUBLIC BENEFIT?

- Better projects that balance development and resource needs are implemented.
- Streamlined and shortened planning and permitting processes.
- Minimization of natural resources conflicts among agencies, groups, and individuals.
- Enhancement or restoration of fish, wildlife and their habitats.
- Economic benefits of greener development projects.

WHAT MORE CAN WE DO?

- Expand our capability to participate in advanced, early project planning.
- Continue to work closely with the public, developers and other Federal agencies to provide technical assistance for future environmental planning actions.
- Increase U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service participation in interagency and public groups that coordinate watershed planning, to ensure the balance between development and resource conservation.



Above: Increasing infrastructure to accommodate population growth can impact natural resources. USFWS photo.

For more information about Project Planning, contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fisheries and Habitat Conservation at 202/208-6394 or visit us on the Internet at <http://fisheries.fws.gov/>.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
800/344-WILD
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February 2005

