

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration

*Program Update September 2002*





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## **Appendices**

*(All information and tables previously found in the appendices in earlier Program Updates are now on the Federal Aid homepage at: <http://federalaid.fws.gov/>.)*

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# Assistant Director's Comments

During Fiscal Year 2002, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Division of Federal Aid (Division) marked a trend toward strengthening its partnerships with States and key conservation interests, and thereby furthering the Service's mission and goals.

New programs such as the Landowner Incentive Program and State Wildlife Grants offered the Division additional opportunities to work with partners to deliver fish and wildlife conservation benefits. The Landowner Incentive Program provides almost \$40 million for State projects that provide funds and technical assistance to landowners for conservation work benefitting endangered, threatened, and at-risk species. State Wildlife Grants provide \$80 million to States to develop and implement programs that benefit wildlife and their habitat, including species that are not hunted or fished. To be eligible to receive funds, a State must commit to develop a comprehensive wildlife conservation plan with appropriate priority placed on those species with the greatest conservation need.

The Division is working with States to develop a framework for Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plans as required by the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program in FY2001 and State Wildlife Grants in FY 2002. A workgroup of State, Federal and nongovernmental representatives is giving States additional assistance in creating useful products and to fulfill the Congressional mandate to identify species of concern and focus on the extent and condition of critical habitat and to develop strategies for overcoming problems.

The Division also worked with the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to select and award 23 grants under the Multistate Grant Program totaling \$6.1 million in FY 2002. The Division is developing a policy and procedures manual designed to ensure that the Program continues to operate as smoothly as it has in the past two years.

In addition, the Division is developing internal partnerships. Working nationally with the Service's Endangered Species Program, the Division is awarding grants and providing financial and performance reports for Private Stewardship Program grants. Once the Endangered Species Program selects a successful grantee, the Division makes the award and tracks the grants through its regional offices. The Federal Aid Information Management System (FAIMS) provides financial and performance reports for the Service about these grants.

The Division plans to start its second round of State audits this year. The Division is reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the most recent round of audits to build a better process. The Division is facilitating the development of a task force (Federal/State) to help design the revised audit processes. The Service is publishing six new audit chapters in the Service Manual [Chapters 417 FW 1-6]. These chapters offer guidance to States about conducting, resolving findings of, and closing audits. The chapters also cover subjects such as audit objectives, planning, appeals and Corrective Action Plans.

FWS Photo: Tupper Ansel Blake



FAIMS also has experienced growth and change. In FY 2002, the FAIMS team purchased equipment and software designed to begin making the transition to electronic grants. The team then automated the State license certification process, and plans are underway for automating the entire grant process in future years.

Federal Aid's National Training Program continues to meet the needs of our ever-expanding group of partners. Courses are currently under development for fiscal

accountability, audits, and dealing with compliance issues. A course is also under consideration for using Group Systems software for better local and remote meetings nationwide. This software organizes remote meetings much like a facilitator would in a local meeting.

Through growth, change, strong partnerships and improved services, the Division is meeting its pledge to its customers in FY 2002 and looks forward to new opportunities in the coming year.

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# Federal Aid Program Overview



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The Federal Aid Program is responsible for administering the following Programs:

- Wildlife Restoration
- Sport Fish Restoration
- Clean Vessel Pumpout
- Boating Infrastructure Grant
- National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant
- Wildlife Conservation and Restoration
- Multistate Conservation Grant
- State Wildlife Grants
- Landowner Incentive

In addition, Federal Aid provides grant management support for endangered species traditional Section 6, Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition, Habitat Conservation Plan planning, and Recovery Land Acquisition Grant Programs.

Congress approved the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act on September 2, 1937, and it began functioning on July 1, 1938. The purpose of this Act is to provide funding for the restoration, rehabilitation and improvement of wildlife habitat, wildlife management and research, and the distribution of information produced by the projects.

Congress amended the Act on October 23, 1970, to include funding for hunter training programs and the development, operation, and maintenance of public target ranges. An 11 percent Federal excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition, and archery equipment, and a 10 percent tax on handguns funds the program. Additional funds are also collected from a 12.4 percent tax on archery equipment. The Department of the Interior apportions these funds each year to the States and Territories (except Washington, D.C.) based on formulas set forth in the Act.

Congress passed the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, commonly called the Dingell-Johnson Act on August 9, 1950. It was modeled after the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act to create a parallel program for fish management, conservation, and restoration. To participate in this Program, States must pass legislation that ensures that the State fishery agency retains license revenues for use in managing their agency. A 10 percent Federal excise tax on fishing rods, reels, creels, lures, flies, and artificial baits, and a 3 percent tax on electronic fishing motors and sonar fish finders funds the Program. The Department of the Interior also apportions these funds each year to the States and Territories under a formula based on each State's land and water area and number of licensed anglers.

## Federal Aid Program Overview

Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act in 1992 to help reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges. The Act established a Federal grant program to the States, administered by the Service and funded at \$10 million annually by the Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund. Federal funds can reimburse up to 75 percent of all approved project costs with the remaining funds provided by the States or marinas. Grants are available to the States on a competitive basis for the construction and/or renovation, operation and maintenance of pumpout and portable toilet dump stations. After States submit grant proposals to the Service for review, the Division then convenes a panel including representatives from the Division's Washington Office, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Coast Guard to rank proposals. The Service awards grants shortly afterward. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA21) reauthorized CVA through FY 2003.

The Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program provides \$32 million over four years (2000- 2003) for grants to the States and Territories. The purpose of the grants is to encourage States, in cooperation with local and private interests, to construct, renovate and maintain tie-up facilities for non-trailerable recreational boats (26 feet or more in length). The Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council and Service panel annually recommends grants for funding to the Service.



FWS Photo: Tom Vandenberg

The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act receives 18 percent of the Sport Fish Restoration Account or 100 percent of the excise tax on small engine fuel (whichever is greater). The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program receives 15 percent of these funds (not to exceed \$15 million). We award Coastal Wetlands grants to States and Territories for coastal wetlands acquisition, restoration, and enhancement. Congress reauthorized the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act in November 2000 through FY 2009.

Congress authorized the Multistate Conservation Grant Program under the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000. It can award up to \$6 million annually, with half the funds coming from each of the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs. These grants must benefit half the States, most of the States in a Service Region, or a regional association of State fish and game departments. In FY 2001 and FY 2002, the Service issued the full amount in grants.

Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 established a grant program available to any State agency or agencies, or other government entities, with authority to conserve resident species of fish and wildlife or plants deemed threatened or endangered. Prerequisites for participation in grants under Section 6 are that a State establishes and maintains an adequate and active program for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Secretary of the Interior. The State must also meet the requirements for an adequate and active program described in 50 CFR 81 and the Service Manual, chapter 521 FW 4.

Two task forces composed of Federal and State members are forming to address Federal Aid audit and policy issues.



The Joint Federal/State Task Force on the next Federal Aid Audit Cycle will perform the following functions.

- Define the audit objectives for Federal Aid audits;
- Define the protocol for Federal Aid audits; and
- Develop training and guidance for the auditors and States for Federal Aid audits.

The Joint Federal/State Task Force on Federal Aid Policy will provide a forum for the Service and State fish and wildlife agencies to cooperatively identify Federal Aid Program issues of national significance and to jointly develop recommendations to the Director concerning those issues.

For FY 2002, \$7.52 million was provided for the traditional Section 6 grant program. Funds are distributed among the Service's Regions based on the number of "counted" species found within the States in the Region and then to the States within a Region based on a Regional competition. Additional Section 6 programs in FY 2002 include: Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition, \$61.3 million; Habitat Conservation Plan Planning, \$6.65 million; Recovery Land Acquisition, \$17.8 million; and \$3 million for administration. For traditional Section 6 grants, the Federal share is 75 percent, but can go up to 90 percent when two or more States cooperate on an eligible grant.



FWS Photo: Dave Menke

The State Wildlife Grants and Landowner Incentive Program were initiated through the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002. This Act included \$85 million (of which \$5 million was allocated to Tribes) for State Wildlife Grants and \$40 million (of which \$5 million was allocated to Tribes) for Landowner Incentive Program for State agencies and Tribes. The formula-based State Wildlife Grants Program will fund a wide range of projects to benefit wildlife species with the greatest conservation need. Grants for the Tribal portion of the State Wildlife Grants Program are competitive. The Landowner Incentive Program awards grants to States and Tribes on

a competitive basis. The funds go to provide technical and financial assistance to landowners for the protection and management of habitat to benefit Federally listed, proposed or candidate species or other at-risk species on private lands. States have received implementation guidelines for the State Wildlife Grants Program and implementation guidelines for the Landowner Incentive Program were in the Federal Register. The Service's External Affairs Program will implement the Tribal portion of these Programs with Federal Aid providing fiscal administration. The Programs are designed to help conserve, develop and enhance the Nation's fish and wildlife resources, and to protect their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

# Focus on Specific Programs and Activities

## Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration

The total apportionment for FY 2002 from the Sport Fish Restoration Program was \$292,786,775—an all-time high for the Program. Beyond providing the record amount of Federal funds, this Program also protected fishing license fees (\$490,847,502) paid to States from diversion to other agencies or for purposes other than the administration of the State fishery agencies.

In the coming year, Congress has scheduled a major funding component of this Program for reauthorization. Specifically, the legislation affecting the transfer of motorboat and small engine fuels taxes to the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund expires in FY 2003. Taxes from these sources currently provide almost 40% of the total funds available for apportionment from this Program. The American League of Anglers and Boaters, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and other conservation groups are leading efforts to get the Program reauthorized.

## State Audits

The Service published six audit chapters in the Federal Register for comment in December 2001. The revised chapters will become part of the Service's Manual. The chapters establish policy and responsibilities for grantee audits, define terms associated with audits, and provide an overview of the audit process. In addition, they establish policies and procedures for audit objectives, planning, conducting, reporting, resolution, and appeals. The establishment of these policies and procedures will enhance the ongoing audit process.

Chapter 1 provides terms associated with the audit and an overview of the audit process. Chapter 2 identifies the programmatic and financial elements of audits. Chapter 3 provides procedures for conducting and reporting on audits of Federal Aid Program grantees. Chapter 4 establishes policy and procedures for resolving findings and implementing recommendations. Included in this chapter are timelines of the audit resolution process. Chapter 5 establishes policy and procedures for appealing Service determinations or corrective actions. Chapter 6 establishes Service policy for resolving findings and implementing recommendations from audits of Federal Aid Program grantees under the Single Audit Act. The audit chapters will enhance the Service's ability to complete audits in a timely manner.

All of the field work for the recent past audit cycle has been completed. All reports from the recent audits will be done by September 2002. We anticipate audit planning for the next cycle of audits to begin in October 2002 and the audit field work to begin early in 2003.

## **Boating Infrastructure Grant Program**

The Sportfishing and Boat Safety Act of 1998 authorized the BIG Program at \$32 million over four fiscal years (\$8 million annually) to encourage States, in cooperation with local and private interests, to construct, renovate, and maintain tie-up facilities for non-trailerable recreational boats (26 feet or more in length). The U.S. Coast Guard estimates 825,000 boats in the U.S. as nontrailerable. Because of their size, these boats can require special facilities for docking and mooring and many marinas cannot meet the needs of this constituency. Unless Congress reauthorizes BIG, the FY 2003 allocation will be the last for the BIG Program.

Besides establishing the BIG Program, the Act required the Service to adopt a national framework (a survey) for a public boating access needs assessment, and directed the Service to prepare a comprehensive national assessment of recreational boating access needs and facilities. The Office of Management and Budget notified the Service that they did not approve a revised survey in March 2002. OMB's concerns focused on the actual survey methods. The Service is evaluating options available regarding the national boating needs assessment.

The BIG Program has two funding levels or tiers. Tier-1 grants provide up to \$100,000 per fiscal year to each State on a noncompetitive basis for construction, renovation, and maintenance of tie-up facilities. Tier-2 grants to States are awarded competitively. The value of funds available for Tier-2 grants in a given fiscal year is the amount remaining after awarding Tier-1 grants. This works out to approximately a 50/50 split of the annual \$8 million allocation.

The Service announced to the States in July 2002 that it is accepting proposals for the FY 2003 allocation of BIG funds. States must submit proposals for both Tier-1 and Tier-2 to the Service's Regional offices by September 30, 2002. The Service will announce awards later this year.

## **Federal Aid Information Management System**

FAIMS is critical to the reconciliation of grant fiscal information between Health and Human Services, Federal Aid, and the Division of Finance. The checks and balances built into FAIMS ensure the integrity of Federal Aid's fiscal data as confirmed by the KPMG.

In FY 2002 Federal Aid Program emphasis for FAIMS will be placed on:

- Improving the timeliness and quality of grant objectives and accomplishment information in FAIMS. FAIMS is frequently used to provide not only an accounting of fiscal information, but also objectives and resource benefits accomplished.

There will be an increase in audit emphasis on the full range of grant management procedures. The Service's efforts this year will be to close the loop on the performance reporting aspect.

- Web-enabling of the annual license certification process and interfacing it to the apportionment process. The FAIMS Team is developing a website that States can use to submit their license certifications to the Service. The Service will test and complete this in FY 2003. The Service formed a FAIMS State User Acceptance Team consisting of State representatives from across the country who will help define system requirements and test and finalize the application. The Department selected the e-Certification project as one of its e-Government initiatives and is monitoring its success.

- Developing capability to provide Internet access to FAIMS information, such as fiscal reports, grant status, grant objectives, and accomplishment information. The FAIMS team is developing the capability to make various FAIMS reports and information available through the Internet.

## National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation

The 2001 Survey is the 10th sponsored by the Service since 1955. The Service has conducted the Survey every five years at the request of State fish and wildlife agencies, and it has become one of the Nation's most important sources of information on wildlife-related recreation.

In March 1999, the Survey Grants-in-Aid Subcommittee of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recommended that the Service conduct a survey in 2001. In June 1999, the Service signed an agreement with the Bureau of Census (Census) to collect the information and produce the reports. Service staff met with State technical committee members and non-governmental organizations to determine survey content. Federal agencies and other major survey users also provided input.

In April and May 2001, Census conducted the first detailed interview wave. Census collected information through computer-assisted interviews conducted primarily by telephone. Census completed screening interviews of over 52,000 households. These interviews identified samples of 30,000 sportsmen (anglers and hunters) and 15,000 wildlife watchers (wildlife feeders, observers, and photographers) for the Survey's detailed interview phase.

Census asked respondents about their 2001 activities and expenditures in three detailed interview waves conducted in May and September 2001, and in January 2002. Interviewers completed data collection on February 28, 2002. The response rate for the detailed data collection phase was 92%.



FWS Photo: Dave Menke

In 2001, 82 million U.S. residents — 39% of the population 16 years and older — participated in some type of wildlife-related recreation. Five million more participated in 2001 than in 1996, the last time the survey was conducted. Anglers, hunters, and wildlife watchers spent \$108 billion pursuing their activities. These expenditures accounted for 1.1 % of the Nation's total gross domestic product. Of the sportsmen, 34 million fished and 13 million hunted. Sixty-six million wildlife enthusiasts observed, fed or photographed wildlife around their homes or on trips in 2001.

A comparison of 2001 and 1996 estimates shows a mixed picture. While total participation in all wildlife-related recreation increased, participation in fishing did not change significantly, wildlife watching increased by 5%, and hunting decreased by 7%. The decrease in hunting was due to decline in small game hunting and other animal hunting (raccoon, groundhog, etc.). Big game hunting and migratory bird hunting held steady.

The Service began releasing preliminary information in May 2002. The first report contains preliminary national estimates; the second, preliminary State information. Both reports are accessible through the following website: <http://federalaid.fws.gov/>

A CD-ROM with all the survey data on it will be available in September. The final National Report and a Quick Facts brochure will be released in October. The 50 State reports will be released in alphabetical order beginning in November.

## Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000

As required by the Act, a Report to Congress was prepared and forwarded to Congress in late August 2001 and can be found on the Federal Aid Home Page <http://federalaid.fws.gov/>. This report details actions taken by the Division to implement the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000.

The Act reduces the funding available for administering the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs. Federal Aid will implement other cuts to comply with these limits and will apportion cost savings resulting from administrative reductions to the States via the normal allocation formula. To date, Federal Aid has apportioned \$8.6 million of the administrative savings to the States.



## Multistate Conservation Grant Program

The Multistate Conservation Grant Program, authorized under the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000, awarded a second annual round of multistate grants in FY 2002. Furthering the partnership between the Service and the States, Congress stipulated that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies would collect, consider

and recommend grant proposals for funding under this Program. The Service intends the Program to fund grants meeting national conservation needs as defined by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and benefitting a majority of the States majority of States in a Service Region, or a regional association of State fish and game departments.

Using pre-established national conservation needs criteria, the

International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recommended grants for funding during FY 2002. With concurrence from the Service Director, Federal Aid funded 23 grants, totaling \$6.1 million.

The Division's support for the Program focuses on grants administration, project monitoring, communications, and technical assistance. In addition, the Division drafted a procedures manual for the Multistate Conservation Grant Program this year.

### Complete list of Multistate Conservation Grants Funded for FY 2002

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>Amount</i>	
American Sportfishing Association, Alexandria, VA	The 2001 Economic Contributions of Sportfishing	\$73,044	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arlington, VA	National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation	\$2,865,032	
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Washington, D.C.	Representation of the Northeastern, Southeastern, Midwest, and Western Associations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in International Conventions and Protocols	\$38,000 FY 2002 \$38,000 FY 2003 \$38,000 FY 2004	
	New Computer Models for Trap Testing in the Development of Best Management Practices	\$76,791	
	Management Assistance Team 2002	\$496,680	
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies's Animal Use Issues Task Force, Washington, D.C.	The 2001 Economic Contributions of Hunting	\$76,992	
States Organization for Boating Access, Washington, D.C.	Pumpout Equipment Standards and Lifecycle Testing	\$299,000	
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Nashville, TN	The Need to Develop a Geographic Information System to Facilitate Integrated Bird Conservation in the Central Hardwoods Bird Conservation Region	\$33,750	
Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Reno, NV	Sage-Grouse Interstate Working Group Coordinator	\$120,000 FY 2002 \$105,000 FY 2003 \$105,000 FY 2004	
	Instream Flow Council, Cheyenne, WY	Instream Flows for Riverine Resource Stewardship	\$16,650

*continued*

## Focus on Specific Programs and Activities

### Complete list of Multistate Conservation Grants Funded for FY 2002 (continued)

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>Amount</i>
National Shooting Sports Foundation, Newtown, CT	Step Outside: creating outreach opportunities through partnership development and marketing	\$171,000
KRA Corporation, Silver Spring, MD	Fish and Wildlife Reference Service Managing and Providing Information to State Wildlife and Natural Resource Agencies	\$413,935
Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University, State University, AR	Fate and Effect of the Aquaculture Therapeutic Potassium Permanganate	\$59,915 FY 2002 \$117,616 FY 2003 \$68,445 FY 2004
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies's Agricultural Conservation Task Force, Washington, D.C.	Coordination of Vegetation Establishment and Management on Conservation Reserve Program Lands	\$75,000 FY 2000 \$75,000 FY 2003
Wildlife Management Institute, Washington, D.C.	Understanding the Relationship Between Waterfowl Hunting Regulations and Hunter Satisfaction/Participation	\$61,450
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies's Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee, Washington, D.C.	Development and Validation of Determinative Analytical Method for the Marker Residue of AQUI-S, a Fish Anesthetic for Public Fish Facilities and Fishery Management	\$49,335 FY 2002 \$162,058 FY 2003 \$89,371 FY 2004
	Development of a Model for Infecting Fish with Columnaris to Facilitate Pivotal Efficacy Trials for Treating the Disease with Candidate Therapeutants	\$105,651
	New Animal Drug Application (NADA) for Oxytetracycline Immersion Therapy for Diseases of Cool and Warm Water Fish Species Cultured on Public Fish Facilities	\$96,921 FY 2002 \$108,006 FY 2003 \$70,400 FY 2004
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies's Executive Committee, Washington, D.C.	Multistate Conservation Grant Program Coordination	\$88,920 FY 2002 \$88,920 FY 2003
Future Fisherman Foundation, Alexandria, VA	Support for State "Hooked On Fishing—Not On Drugs" and Fishing Tackle Loaner Programs	\$294,200 FY 2002 \$262,000 FY 2003
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies's Migratory Bird Committee, Washington, D.C.	Bird Conservation for the Nation: Implementation of All-Bird Conservation	\$250,000
International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies's Furbearer Resources Task Force, Washington, D.C.	Outreach Best Management Practices	\$200,000
Council for Environmental Education, Houston, TX	Science and Civics, Sustaining Wildlife, Involving High School Students and Addressing Wildlife Needs	\$52,656 FY 2002 \$57,658 FY 2003

## National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 3951-3956) authorizes the Director of the Service to make matching grants to coastal States, including those for the acquisition, restoration, enhancement, management and preservation of coastal wetlands. Coastal wetlands support a high percentage of our nation's threatened and endangered species, fishery resources, migratory songbirds, migrating and wintering waterfowl. For the purposes of this Act, the definition of a coastal wetland ecosystem also applies to the Great Lakes and their watersheds. These grants are available annually on a competitive basis to coastal States through the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant program. Funding for this Program comes from the Sport Fish Restoration Account. Excise taxes on fishing equipment, motorboat and small engine fuels support it.

Since the Service began awarding grants in 1992, we have awarded approximately \$105 million to 25 States and 1 U.S. territory to protect and/or restore about 130,000 acres of coastal wetland ecosystems. The Program's emphases on encouraging partnerships, supporting watershed planning and leveraging ongoing projects has helped stretch program funds. The resource benefits of this Program have included habitat protection and restoration for migratory birds, shorebirds, waterfowl, endangered and threatened species, and fish and shellfish.

The Service has recently finalized the new rule for this Program. Since its inception, the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program was administered using internal interim guidance and the standard grant administration policies of our Federal Aid Program. The new rule was developed using significant input from State conservation agencies and other Program cooperators. We published the Program's proposed rule in the Federal Register in August 2001 for public comments. Nine State government agencies commented on the draft rule. These comments covered a wide range of topics and the Service updated the rule in response to many of these suggestions. Changes were then subjected to additional internal review within the Service and also by OMB.

In FY 2002, the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program awarded nearly \$14.5 million in grants for 20 projects to 10 States to protect, restore and enhance coastal

wetlands. More than \$57 million from State and private partners will augment the grant-funded projects. Although State agencies are recipients of the grants, many projects have multiple partners including: local and Federal government agencies; Tribes; companies; conservation and service organizations; and private landowners.

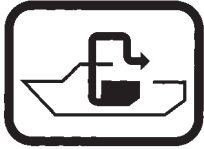
States submitted a total of 42 proposals for the 2003 funding allocation for this Program. A panel of Service representatives from several divisions and Regions met in early August 2002 to review the current proposals. The panel provided the Service's Director with their funding recommendations. The Director will announce the Program awards in October 2002.

Through the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, the Service provides up to \$15 million annually. Results of the last five years are as follows:

### National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program—5 Year Summary

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i># of Projects</i>	<i>Awarded</i>	<i>Acres</i>
1998	20	\$9.8M	12,680
1999	18	\$9.8M	24,900
2000	25	\$11.8M	5,500
2001	22	\$15M	11,350
2002	20	\$14.5M	27,700

### Clean Vessel Act



Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act in 1992 to help reduce pollution from vessel sewage

discharges. The Act established a Federal grant program to the States. It's administered by the Service and funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resource's Trust Fund. Federal funds can cover up to 75 percent of all approved project costs with the remaining funds provided by the States or marinas. Approximately \$10 million is available annually for this Program. Grants are available to the States on a competitive basis for the construction and/or renovation, operation and maintenance of pumpout and portable toilet dump stations, and for education programs that teach recreational boaters the importance of proper disposal of their sewage. Federal Aid staff review and rank proposals as do a panel including representatives from the Divisions' Washington Office, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Coast Guard. The panel presents a non-binding recommendation to the Service's Director regarding their ranking of project proposals.

A total of \$10.1 million was available for the FY 2002 grant cycle. This included the combined amounts available from the carryover of unobligated or de-obligated funds from previous years and the FY 2002 allocation. There were 33 project proposals totaling \$14.6 million submitted by State agencies for the available funds. Thirty three projects were funded, although some at lower level than requested. Seventeen coastal pumpout proposals received a total of \$6.2 million in funding and 16 inland proposals received \$3.9 million. The latter funding was an all time high for inland programs.

States may submit proposals for FY 2003 this fall and grants will be awarded early next year.

### State Wildlife Grants

President Bush signed the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002, into law on November 5, 2001. This bill included \$80 million for wildlife conservation grants to States and Territories, and \$5 million to Tribes under the State Wildlife Grants Program. The Act directed the apportionment of funds on a formula basis to the States based on land area and population. Grants for the Tribal portion of the State Wildlife Grants Program will be awarded competitively. The FY 2002 State Wildlife Grants funds will be available for obligation by the States until September 30, 2003, after which remaining unobligated funds will be reapportioned.

The Service designed the State Wildlife Grants Program to assist States by providing Federal funds for the development and implementation of Programs that benefit wildlife and their habitat, including species that are not hunted or fished. It permits both planning and implementation of programs. The Federal share for planning grants may not exceed 75% and may not exceed 50% for other types of grants. To establish eligibility for these funds, the States and Territories must first submit or commit to develop by October 1, 2005, a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan. Once a State has done this, it may then submit grant proposals, grant agreements and associated documents to the appropriate Regional Federal Aid Office for review and approval.

In using State Wildlife Grants funds, as with other Federal grant programs, the States must comply with the Administrative Rules, 43 CFR Part 12, the National Environmental Policy Act, section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and other applicable Federal laws and regulations. Grant documents must include descriptions of each project's purpose and need, objectives, approach, time line, cost, location(s), and the expected benefits.





Federal Aid has worked closely with State representatives and other stakeholders gathering input to ensure smooth Program implementation. The Regions and key State representatives reviewed draft State Wildlife Grants implementation guidelines. A work group of Federal Aid and State representatives helped finalize the recommendations. Final State Wildlife Grants (FY 2002) Implementation Guidelines were forwarded from the Director to the State wildlife agencies during late March, and clarifications to these guidelines regarding wildlife education (limited), wildlife law enforcement (limited), and wildlife-associated recreation (not eligible) followed in early May 2002. The Service conducted five State Wildlife Grants workshops during the months of April and May 2002 to simplify this Program's implementation.

### **Landowner Incentive Program**

Congress funded the Landowner Incentive Program, authorized in the FY 2002 Interior Appropriations Bill, with \$40 million derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It provides competitive matching grants to States, Territories, the District of Columbia, and Tribes. The Service will allocate tribes \$4 million, \$34.8 million to the States and Territories, and \$1.2 million will be for Federal Aid administrative costs. The grants will establish or supplement landowner incentive programs that provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for projects that protect and restore habitats of listed species or species determined to be at-risk. Landowner Incentive Program projects will likely involve activities such as the restoration of marginal farmlands to wetlands, the removal of exotic plants to restore natural prairies, a change in grazing practices and fencing to enhance important riparian habitats, instream structural improvements to benefit aquatic species, road closures to protect habitats and reduce harassment of wildlife, and conservation easements. The Service requires a minimum 25% non-Federal share of project costs.

The Service received initial comments regarding draft Landowner Incentive Program implementation guidelines from State Directors and the Regional Offices. Subsequently, a working group of key State and Federal Aid representatives met to further discuss Landowner Incentive Program implementation and selection criteria used in evaluating the grant proposals. Federal Aid published a Notice and Request for Comments (proposed implementation guidelines) for the Landowner Incentive Program in the Federal Register on June 7, 2002. The Service has reviewed the public comments and is preparing the final Federal Register Notice and Request for Proposals for publishing.

Subsequently, States and Territories will submit grant proposals to the Service for scoring and prioritization during a 60-day submission period likely to be in late September or early October, 2002. Once Service staff prepare award recommendations, the Director will review and approve those of high merit (subject to the final approval of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget). The Service will notify States of the awards and help States meet Federal grant requirements. Any funds not obligated during the first round of competition will be available in one or more future rounds until spent.

The Service worked closely with internal and external stakeholders to communicate proposed processes and procedures and receive feedback. Federal Aid is working closely with the Endangered Species Division as they develop the similarly-focused Private Stewardship Grant Program.

## Federal Aid National Training Program

The National Federal Aid Training Program functions as part of the Washington Office of Federal Aid. The training program develops and delivers grants management training for Federal Aid staff and State fish and wildlife agency grantees. These training courses increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of State and Federal personnel who manage Federal Aid grants. This training helps to ensure that Federal Aid grant managers consistently apply the laws, rules and policies that govern Federal Aid Program administration.

Almost 600 State and Federal Aid staff have received grants training specifically to our grant programs through courses developed by or offered in cooperation with the Federal Aid Training Program. That number includes 315 Basic Grants Management Course graduates, 227 Project Leaders Course graduates, and 54 participants in a boating grant writing workshop. An April 2002 needs assessment showed a continuing need for basic training in grants management, fiscal grants management, project leaders courses and other specialized grant program training. Currently, Basic Grants Management courses are scheduled once each year. Since the Project Leaders Course pilot in March 2000,



FWS photo. Ryan Haggerty.

interest and demand for the State specific Federal Aid Project Leaders Course has grown. Six Project Leaders Courses, were completed in FY 2002. We also plan nine Project Leaders Courses customized for State's individual needs for FY 2003. The Service is also developing a course for Federal Aid fiscal managers and a compliance issue course.

The Federal Aid Training Program also provides training tools, resources, instructors and assistance in developing other grant management training. To date, this training has focused on grant writing skills for the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program, Clean Vessel Program and boating access grants.

Course descriptions, an on-line application, training materials and grant manager's resources are available on Federal Aid's Training Program Internet site at: <http://training.fws.gov/fedaid/>

## New Accomplishment Reporting Codes for Aquatic Education

### Aquatic Education Codes

2511	Students/Participants
2512	New Educators Trained
2561	Construction
2581	Program Costs



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Division of Federal Aid**

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