



**Fisheries  
& Habitat  
Conservation**

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

### Fisheries and Habitat Conservation

# Environmental Contaminants Program

*Our mission is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.*



*A pipeline ruptured and over 30,000 gallons of light crude oil were spilled into a 7-acre wetland. Strong currents and winds moved the oil onto Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, TX. Wetlands impacted by the spill provide important habitat for numerous species of birds, terrestrial reptiles, and mammals, all of which were directly impacted by floating oil. USFWS photo.*



*Phragmites (Phragmites australis) management in a wetland at Horsehead Wetland Center, Maryland using glyphosate. Photo: Julie Thompson/USFWS.*

The Environmental Contaminants (EC) Program provides contaminants expertise to all Service programs including the National Wildlife Refuge System, Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, Fisheries, Marine Mammals, International Affairs, and Law Enforcement. EC Biologists use their expertise to work regularly as partners with other agencies and organizations as follows:

#### SPILL RESPONSE

- Participate in pre-spill contingency planning at local, state, and national levels to prevent or reduce the impacts of oil and hazardous waste spills on fish, wildlife and their habitats.
- Assist the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Defense, or other federal or state agencies responsible for cleaning up contaminated areas to ensure that fish and wildlife and their habitats are adequately protected during, and upon completion of, the cleanup.

#### HABITAT ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION

- Plan and implement activities that assess and restore natural resources degraded by pollution in partnership with other affected state, tribal, and federal natural resource trustees.
- Survey lands for contaminants before they are acquired for the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- Investigate potential sources of contamination on refuge lands, prioritize cleanups, and assist Refuge Managers on cleanup and restoration.

#### WATER QUALITY

- Assist the EPA, states, tribes, and other Service programs in evaluation of how pollutants affect fish and wildlife and their habitats.
- Assist with the development of water quality standards to protect aquatic resources, including important recreational and commercial fish, and the watersheds that support them.

#### PESTICIDES AND PEST MANAGEMENT

- Work cooperatively with EPA during pesticide registration and labeling to prevent and minimize unintended impacts of pesticides.

- Help ensure fish, wildlife, and people are protected through an internal pesticide review process and implementation of integrated pest management, when the Service determines that pesticide use is necessary to manage pests on Refuges or other Service management units.



*The Environmental Contaminants Program works to ensure clean water and healthy habitats throughout the United States. Father and son fishing at Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge. Photo: Phyllis Cooper/USFWS.*



*This mussel release is part of a program to restore mussels in the Clinch River. In 1998, nearly all aquatic life for seven miles was killed when over 1,300 gallons of a toxic chemical were spilled. Photo: Dolores Savignano/USFWS.*

**For more information about the Contaminants Program, contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fisheries and Habitat Conservation at 703/358-2148 or visit us on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/contaminants/>.**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
800/344-WILD  
<http://www.fws.gov>**

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