

# U.S. Ramsar Site Nomination and Designation

## Who can nominate a site:

Any local government, group, community, private organization, or landowner can nominate a site for inclusion on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance. The Federal government can also nominate sites, such as National Parks, National Forests, or National Wildlife Refuges.

## Basic requirements:

The site must meet at least one of the nine criteria for inclusion. The criteria can be found online at [http://www.ramsar.org/key\\_criteria.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/key_criteria.htm). All of the landowners and stakeholders of the proposed site must agree to its inclusion on the Ramsar List.

## Nomination package:

The petitioner must submit a complete nomination package to the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), with a copy to the Division of International Conservation, USFWS. This package must include:

- A cover letter addressed to the Director of the USFWS describing how the proposed site meets the Ramsar criteria;
- Written endorsements from each of the landowners, the local or state wildlife or natural resource agency, and a member of Congress representing the geographic area. Although not required, additional letters of support from other stakeholders associated with the proposed site greatly contribute to the nomination process; and

- A completed Ramsar Information Sheet, available online at [http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key\\_ris\\_e.doc](http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_e.doc).

## Designation process:

1. USFWS staff review the completed nomination package and make a recommendation as to its qualification for inclusion on the Ramsar List;
2. The USFWS Director makes a final designation decision;
3. The USFWS delivers the nomination package and communicates U.S. Ramsar site designation to the Ramsar Secretary General. Typically, the date the package is received by the Secretary General is also the official designation date for that site;
4. The Ramsar Secretariat conducts a thorough review of the package and may request additional information or revisions to the Ramsar Information Sheet; and
5. The Ramsar site is added to the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.

## Ramsar site obligations:

In coordination with the U.S. National Ramsar Committee, Ramsar site owners and managers should:

- Promote the conservation of the Ramsar site;
- Inform the Ramsar Secretariat if the ecological character of the Ramsar site has changed, is changing or is likely to change as the result of

technological developments, pollution or other human interference; and

- Update the Ramsar Information Sheet for the site every six years.

## For more information:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Division of International Conservation  
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Arlington, VA 22203  
703/358-1754 Fax: 703/358-2115  
Email: [jean\\_schlegel@fws.gov](mailto:jean_schlegel@fws.gov)

[www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)  
<http://www.fws.gov/international/ramsar/ramsar.htm>  
<http://www.ramsarcommittee.us/>



*Black-crowned Night Heron*  
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