



Ferrbank Science Center

Safe Harbor Agreements for Private Landowners

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is looking for landowners interested in managing their land for the benefit of threatened and endangered species.



What are Safe Harbor Agreements?

Safe Harbor Agreements are voluntary arrangements between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and non-Federal landowners. The agreements encourage management for listed species to promote recovery on non-Federal land by giving landowners assurances that no additional future regulatory restrictions will be imposed if population levels increase on their property as a result of their activities.

Why protect threatened and endangered species on private lands?

Protection of Federally listed species on Federal lands is a management priority. However, many listed species occur primarily or even exclusively on private lands, so it is essential to involve private landowners in protecting and recovering endangered species through policies that provide landowners assurances that no additional future regulatory restrictions will be imposed. Protection on private lands benefits listed species by reducing habitat fragmentation; maintaining, restoring, or enhancing existing habitats; maintaining or increasing population numbers or distribution; and establishing buffers for protected areas.

What about candidate species?

Candidate species are plants and animals for which the Fish and Wildlife Service has sufficient information on their biological status and threats to propose them as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but for which development of a proposed listing regulation is precluded by other higher priority listing activities. Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances for Private Property Owners are very similar to Safe Harbor Agreements except the ultimate goal is to remove enough threats to target species to eliminate the need for listing under the ESA.

Who is eligible?

Any non-Federal landowner can request the development of a Safe Harbor Agreement, including:

- private individuals
- local governments
- State natural resource agencies
- businesses
- Tribal governments
- conservation organizations

How do I enroll?



Forest Service

Landowners interested in habitat restoration should contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services Field Office in your state (listed below) and ask to speak to someone about the Safe Harbor Program. You, with the aid of the Service, must gather general information such as a map of the property, information on listed species that occur on the property, and any other pertinent information. Using this information, the Service will describe baseline conditions for the enrolled property in terms appropriate for the covered species (i.e., number and location of individuals or habitat measurement) and document that the proposed conservation activity will result in a net conservation benefit to the covered species. A Safe Harbor Agreement is developed and attached to your "enhancement for survival" permit form. The Service then issues you a 10(a)(1)(A) permit. This permit will allow you to return your property to baseline conditions at the end of the Agreement.

Alabama - 334/441 5181

Arkansas - 501/513 4470

Florida - Jacksonville 904/232 2580; Panama City 850/769 0552; Vero Beach 561/562 3909

Georgia - 912/265 9336

Louisiana - 318/291 3100

Mississippi - 601/965 4900

North Carolina - Asheville 704/258 3939; Raleigh 919/856 4520

South Carolina - 843/727 4707

Tennessee - 931/528 6481