



# Ecological Services

- Our mission is to conserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats through consultation, cooperation and communication for the continuing benefit of the American people.
- Ecological Services has 16 field offices located in 10 states throughout the Southeast and in the Caribbean.



- The main program areas under Ecological Services are Endangered Species, Habitat Conservation & Environmental Contaminants.

## Endangered Species

This program is responsible for the administration of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), which is regarded as one of the most comprehensive wildlife conservation laws in the world. The Endangered Species program works to conserve and restore endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend.



**Candidate Conservation**  
Through this program, we maintain a list of "candidate" species, which are species for which we have enough information to propose

for listing as endangered or threatened, but have not yet been proposed for listing. We work with States and private partners to carry out conservation actions for candidate species to prevent their further decline and possibly eliminate the need to list them as endangered or threatened.

## Listing

This program determines whether to add a species to the Federal lists of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants. Species are listed on the basis of "the best scientific and commercial data available." Listings are made solely on the basis of the species' biological status and threats to its existence. All listings are based on sound science and peer review to ensure the accuracy of the best available data.

## Recovery

The ESA's ultimate goal is to "recover" species so they no longer need protection under the law. The ESA provides for recovery plans to be developed describing the steps needed to restore a species to health. Appropriate public and private agencies and institutions and other qualified persons assist in the development and implementation of recovery plans. Involvement of the public and interested stakeholders in development of recovery plans is a key to success.



## Section 10 Permits

The ESA prohibits activities affecting threatened and endangered species unless authorized by a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) or the National Marine Fisheries Service. Section 10 of the ESA is designed to regulate a wide range of activities affecting plants and animals designated as endangered or threatened, and the habitats upon which they depend. For endangered species, permits may be issued for scientific research; enhancement of propagation or survival of the species, including conservation education; and taking that is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity. For threatened species, permits also may be issued for zoological, horticultural, or botanical exhibition; educational use; and special purposes consistent with the ESA.

Recovery and interstate commerce permits are issued to allow for take as part of activities intended to foster the recovery of listed species. A typical use of a recovery permit is to allow for scientific

research on a listed species in order to better understand the species' long-term survival needs. Interstate commerce permits also allow transport and sale of listed species across state lines.

## Cooperation with States

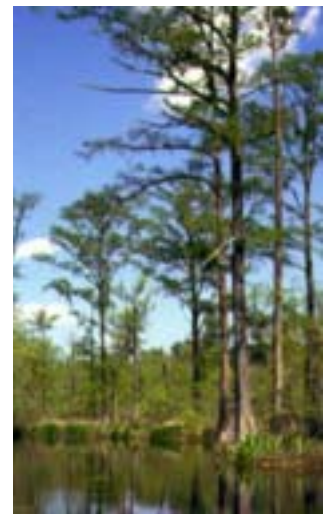
The protection of species is also achieved through partnerships with the States. Section 6 of the ESA encourages each State to develop and maintain conservation programs for resident

federally-listed threatened and endangered species. Federal financial assistance is available to attract State participation. Some State laws and regulations are even more restrictive in granting exceptions or permits than the current ESA.

## Consultation

The ESA requires all federal agencies to conserve threatened and endangered species. While managing federal lands or engaging in other federal business that could affect listed species, agencies must first consult with the Service to ensure that their actions will not harm a listed species or damage or destroy its habitat. These actions include the issuing of federal permits, licenses granting approval to certain private activities, or federally

funded actions. In the relatively few cases where the Service determines a proposed action will harm a species, it suggests ways for landowners to modify their proposals to conserve



listed species. The Service also works with agencies to minimize potential harm to protected species, allowing projects to continue. Rarely is a project terminated because of a listed species.



*Habitat Conservation Planning*

This provision of the ESA is designed to relieve restrictions on private landowners who want to develop land inhabited by threatened or endangered species. Private landowners who develop and implement an approved “habitat conservation plan” providing for conservation of the species can receive an “incidental take permit” that allows their development project to go forward.



**Habitat Conservation and Environmental Contaminants**

Habitat Conservation and Environmental Contaminants program is responsible for providing information and consultative services for the protection and conservation of fish and wildlife species and their habitats to a widely diverse audience including Federal, State, and local governments, businesses, private and individuals. Such consultations include: mapping of wetlands and coastal areas, habitat restoration and management; water, transportation and energy development project impact avoidance and mitigation; a wide variety of contaminants avoidance, restoration, and remediation; and public outreach and education. The program provides the Service with internal and external review to insure compliance for a variety of Federal environmental and resource laws. In addition, the program partners with private and public landowners to assist them with the management and restoration of fish and wildlife habitat on their properties.



*Federal Permits & Projects*

The Service evaluates Federally constructed, licensed or permitted water resource development projects and provides recommendations to reduce these impacts to fish and wildlife resources. Under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, Clean Water Act and other legislation, Federal agencies permitting or constructing these projects must consult with the Service during the planning of projects. The Service provides technical support to the agencies in the planning process, providing fish and wildlife resources information and analyses while recommending measures to mitigate impacts.

*FERC Hydropower*

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licenses non-Federal hydropower projects under the Federal Power Act. Our role in hydropower licensing involves providing technical evaluation on the impacts of hydroelectric projects to fish and wildlife resources. License applicants/licensees are required to consult with us to provide FERC with recommendations for protection, mitigation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources and mandatory prescriptions for fish passage.

*Coastal Program*

This program focuses on restoring ecosystem health to bays, estuaries, and watersheds along the coastlines of the United States. Working with partners, the Coastal Program provides funding and technical assistance for projects to restore wetlands and seagrass beds, control invasive species, acquire rare or exceptionally important habitats, remove dams to allow fish passage to spawning areas, and community outreach regarding coastal fish and wildlife resources.

*Environmental Contaminants*

This program works with partners to prevent contamination and maintain the health of ecosystems; identifies contamination that adversely affects the health of fish, wildlife, and their ecosystems; and acts as Federal trustee for fish and wildlife injured by contamination, negotiating settlements

from polluters to restore lost resources and their benefits to local citizens.

*National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)*

The NWI prepares and distributes maps showing the location and types of wetlands found throughout the Region. It also provides technical assistance in wetland delineation, wetland soils, wetland plants, wetland hydrology, wetland trends and wetland values to individuals, other Service programs, and other Federal and State agencies.

*Partners for Fish and Wildlife*

The Partners for Fish & Wildlife program restores, improves, and protects fish and wildlife habitat on private lands through alliances between the Service, other organizations, and individuals, while leaving the land in private ownership.

*National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)*

This program works with all Service program areas to assure compliance with the provisions of NEPA and implementing regulations. In addition,



the program works with other Federal agencies to provide comments on their compliance documents, where the Service has special expertise or legal authority.

*Ecological Services Field Offices*

Asheville, NC .....	828/258 3939
Athens, GA .....	706/613 9493
Boqueron, PR .....	787/851 7297
Charleston, SC .....	843/727 4707
Clemson, SC .....	864/656 2432
Conway, AR .....	501/513 4470
Cookeville, TN .....	931/528 6481
Daphne, AL .....	334/441 5181
Frankfort, KY .....	502/695 0468
Jackson, MS .....	601/965 4900
Jacksonville, FL .....	904/232 2580
Lafayette, LA .....	337/291 3130
Panama City, FL .....	850/769 0552
Raleigh, NC .....	919/856 4520
Rio Grande, PR .....	787/887 8769
Vero Beach, FL .....	561/562 3909

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