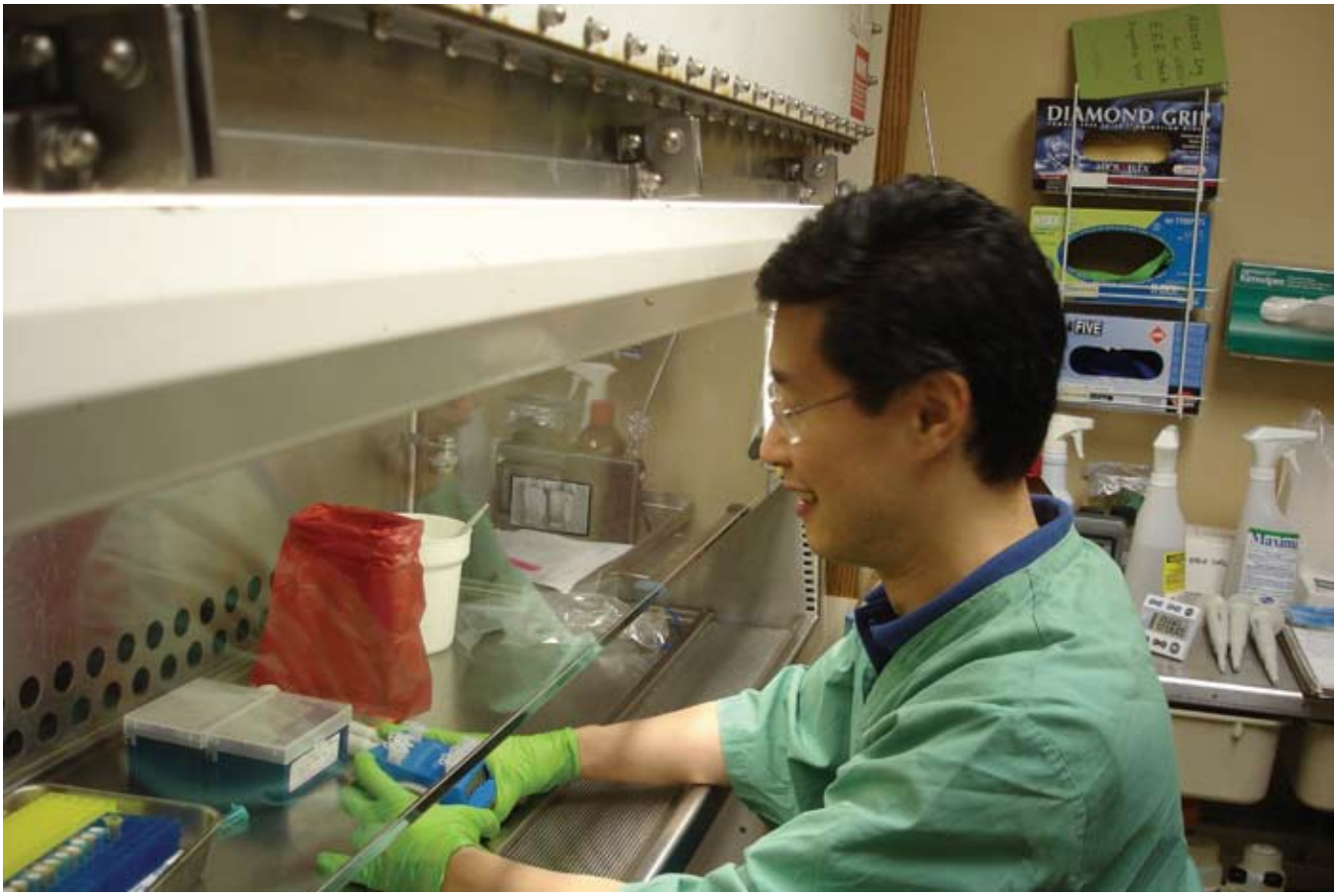
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Management of Fish and Wildlife Service Scientific Publications

Recommended Outlets, Procedures and Policies



"Develop a scientific publication policy and publication outlet for the Service." — Director Steve Williams, January 2005

Developed by the Science Committee, June 2006
Revised January 2007

Publications, Recommended Outlets[1], Procedures and Policies

Preface

Early in the tenure of former Director Steve Williams, the Directorate expressed interest in finding out more about publishing in the Service and about employees' perspectives about publishing. As a result, Steve charged the newly-formed Service Science Committee with looking at publication outlets, procedures and policies in the Service and with presenting its findings and recommendations to the Directorate. Not surprisingly, the Science Committee welcomed this opportunity to help the Service. Its members understand the important role that scientific information plays in natural resource decisions and they recognize that many scientists in the Service are unsure about the Service's commitment to publishing and disseminating scientific information.

The Science Committee quickly formed a ten-person subcommittee to address Steve's charge. Soon after, members of the subcommittee rolled up their sleeves and got down to work. Each member brought something special to the table. One Service member had more than twenty years of experience producing and disseminating scientific publications. Another Service member was deeply involved in providing Service employees with electronic access to scientific journals and to scientific information contained in libraries throughout the country. One member from the U.S. Geological Survey brought almost a decade of experience working with the American Fisheries Society to help its members share and access scientific information. Another member from U.S. Forest Service had spent more than 25 years managing scientific editing and publishing. In addition to these skills, each member brought a passion for science excellence and a deep commitment to helping the Service maintain its position as a science leader among resource agencies nationally and internationally.

The subcommittee produced a report that lays out a solid strategy for ensuring that the Service encourages its scientists to share scientific information with one another, with scientists outside the Service, and with resource managers who depend on science and scientific information to help inform their daily decisions. Much of the report is devoted to describing what the Service needs to do to continue to be a leader in producing and disseminating scientific information and in managing fish and wildlife resources with the benefit of scientific information. In both regards, the report lays out an exciting vision and direction for the Service.

The Science Committee is confident that this report will be received well by the Director and Directorate. The Committee anticipates that after the Directorate considers the findings and recommendations in the report, the Directorate is likely to need additional assistance in taking the next steps to manifest its commitment to scientific publishing and dissemination of scientific information. For example, if the Directorate has a need for more information about the costs of implementing the Committee's recommendations, the Committee is prepared to develop that information and provide it to the Directorate quickly. Likewise, if the Directorate is interested in developing specific policies or Director's Orders that would be needed to implement the report's recommendations, the Committee is prepared to work with others in the Service to flesh out those policies. Similarly, if the Directorate is interested in developing an organizational framework that could be used to manage the Service's publication outlets, procedures and policies, the Committee would be available to assist.

As the executive secretary for the Science Committee, I've been privileged to assist the Publications Subcommittee and the Committee as a whole. I've also been privileged to see the passion, energy, resourcefulness and bold thinking they brought to the important charge Steve gave them. Likewise, I've enjoyed seeing the Committee respond to Dale's leadership and his keen interests in science. All ten members of the subcommittee performed exceptionally and sacrificed unselfishly. John Wenburg, who chaired the subcommittee, deserves special praise and appreciation for his leadership and for his unsurpassed commitment to science excellence.

Bill Knapp
Executive Secretary
Science Committee
September 19, 2006

[1] The term "outlets" is used in this report generically to refer to alternative vehicles for disseminating scientific information. It includes primary journals, often called "refereed journals", such as those produced at regular intervals by the American Fisheries Society, The Wildlife Society, Society for Conservation Biology, etc. It also includes an assortment of publication types or "series" that the Service has produced over its long history, many of which are still used today.

Executive Summary

The Science Committee recommends that the Service commit to building the infrastructure, policies and support needed to facilitate publication in the scientific literature by its employees. The Service should continue to encourage and even expand the use of primary journals among its scientists. When these journals are not appropriate, one of the four recommended Service outlets should be used. An explicit publication policy and review process should be developed. The entire process, from submission to dissemination, for all Service publications, should be web-based and easily accessible.

Proper design will ensure that this process is seen as a positive for Service scientists, not a burden. The benefits of implementing this system are many. It will provide additional outlets for Service science. It will increase accountability, efficiency, and responsible use of Federal funds. It will conveniently put Service science products in the hands of the end users. It will remove the guesswork from the publication process for Service scientists. Finally, it will ensure scientific rigor and transparency and will allow Service scientists to more easily meet the letter and spirit of the Information Quality Act and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Department of the Interior (DOI) standards.

The process must be mandatory and adequately explained to Service scientists. In the long run, even the most carefully designed process will work only if there is strong institutional support for its use. "Mentoring Science in the Service" by providing Service scientists adequate support and encouragement to publish their work is critical to making the system successful.

Director's Charge to the Science Committee

The Science Committee was charged by former Director Williams to "develop a publications policy and publications outlet for the Service." The Committee subsequently formed a Publications Subcommittee in mid-2005, with ten members, including Service and USGS scientists and information specialists. A list of members of the Subcommittee and their organizational affiliations appears on page 7.

The first step the Subcommittee took to meet Director Williams' charge was to gather input from each Region in order to assemble a comprehensive picture of the publication outlets, procedures and policies currently in use. The Subcommittee used this information over the next six months to shape its initial findings and recommendations. Subsequent discussions and meetings among Subcommittee members and with the Science Committee produced agreement concerning the findings and recommendations presented in this report.

The Science Committee believes this report provides a framework that the Service can use to establish an efficient and transparent process that encourages and assists Service employees in publishing scientific information. The framework described in this report would take the guesswork out of current Service publications policies and practices and would meet the letter and spirit of the OMB and DOI requirements pertaining to peer review and scientific conduct.

Service's History of Publishing

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a rich and robust publication legacy, dating as far back as the first *North American Fauna* monograph, Revision of the North American Pocket Mice, by C. Hart Merriam, published in 1889. Service publications have contributed in significant ways to the effectiveness of the Service as a conservation agency and to the reputation and prestige of the Service and its scientists in the broader conservation community. For most of the last hundred years, the Service provided editorial services to assist its scientists in publishing scientific findings in various outlets, including the Service's own extensive series of publications. However, with the creation of the National Biological Survey (NBS) in 1994, these services were lost.

Nevertheless, Service scientists have continued to transfer information in a variety of formats, and the existing external peer-reviewed scientific journals ("primary journals") have remained a useful outlet. However, publishing in primary journals has been limited due, in large part, to the lack of institutional support and encouragement to publish within the Service. Furthermore, primary journals often are not suitable for publication of Service science due to factors such as length, format, and timeliness. As a result, far too often information generated by Service scientists remains unpublished and therefore unavailable to other scientists and managers.

Key Findings
1. The Service has a rich and robust publication legacy.
2. The reputation and stature of the Service and its scientists have benefited from the Service's capacity to publish the findings of its scientists.
3. When Service scientists and decision-makers have the ability to access and share scientific information by publishing, fish and wildlife resources benefit, as do the Service, its employees and the conservation community as a whole.

Several alternative publication outlets are currently

being used by Service scientists. In fact, many Programs and Regions have independently created various publication series carrying the Service logo and banner. While many of these publications help fulfill an obligation to transfer information in a timely manner, they lack standard procedures for format, rigor, review, and dissemination. Most of these publications are not standardized among Regions or Programs, and often they are difficult for other scientists inside and outside the Service to obtain. The impact and utility of publications that are not widely available is greatly diminished. These alternate publications also contribute to the uncertainty that has developed among Service scientists over the past decade regarding how and where to publish their work. They have also created uncertainty about the quality and utility of data in those publications, particularly ones that are produced without the benefit of rigorous peer review. Likewise, the emphasis that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has placed on peer review and development of agency-specific peer review requirements has called additional attention to data that are published in internal publications that have not been peer-reviewed. This is especially true of data used in what OMB refers to as scientific assessments and of other data that OMB considers influential scientific information.

Key Findings
1. The Service and its employees have been resourceful in creating and using several informal outlets or formats to transfer scientific information generated by Service scientists.
2. Most of those outlets lack the rigor and standard procedures, like the peer review, that professional journals require and that typically convey legitimacy to the publications; to the data, findings and opinions in them; and to the scientists who author them.
3.Most of these in-house publications are not widely available inside or outside of the Service.
4. These publications and the data in them have the potential to create uncertainty about the quality of the data and about the reputation of the Service as a science-based conservation organization.

Ask ten Service employees and you may get ten different answers to the following types of questions: Are there current Service publication policies in place? What are those policies? What type of review is required for Service publications? Where should Service scientists strive to publish? How are publications obtained from other programs or Regions? Clearly, the Service needs to identify a standard publications policy to provide straightforward, consistent, and effective guidance for its scientists. Furthermore, the Service needs to embrace and support publishing in the scientific literature as a primary means of promoting responsible use of Federal funds, organizational effectiveness, professionalism, and increased morale within the workforce.

Key Findings
1. The Service would benefit from re-established standard publication outlets and standard publication procedures and policies to provide straight-forward, consistent and effective guidance to its scientists and their managers.
2. Efforts to provide a consistent framework will succeed when the Service makes an organizattional commitment to explicity value and support publishing.

Specific Findings and Recommendations for Establishing Publication Outlets, Procedures and Policies in the Service

The Committee has chosen to group its findings and recommendations under four separate headings, each of which identifies an important action the Service should take:

- Elevate the importance of publishing in the Service.
- Identify suitable publications outlets for the Service.
- Ensure appropriate editorial review, policy review and peer review for all Service scientific publications.
- Provide a streamlined Web-based system for the Service publications process and for dissemination of all Service publications.

Elevate the importance of publishing within the Service.

As a result of the Department of the Interior Reorganization in 1994, several important scientific capacities or scientific functions were transferred from the Service to the National Biological Survey (NBS), a newly-created bureau focused on scientific research. The Service lost its formal research organization, previously known as "Region 8", which included several hundred scientists, numerous research centers and cooperative research units at universities across the country, and the associated funding. In addition, the Service lost a more subtle, but equally important, infrastructure that had supported and facilitated scientific publishing by Service employees, not just in Region 8, but also across the Service's resource management programs, including Refuges, Ecological Services, Migratory Birds, Fisheries, Endangered Species, Contaminants and Habitat Conservation. The Service was quick to recognize the consequences and implications of losing much of its capacity to conduct scientific research, but was much slower

to understand the consequences of losing the publications capacity that was also transferred to NBS.

Throughout the ensuing years, the Service has lacked the infrastructure and associated policies, procedures, capacity and funding to systematically support scientific publishing by its employees. At times it has overlooked these needs because of misconceptions that Service employees no longer conduct research and, therefore, that publishing is no longer important to them or, more importantly, to the overall mission of the Service. At other times, the importance of research and publishing has been recognized, but has not been a priority. There has been a concern throughout all levels of the agency that elevating the profile of research or publishing could result in more staff, facilities, and funding being transferred out of the Service.

Key Findings
1. Creation of the National Biological Survey (NBS) in 1994 resulted in the Service's publications capacity and publications infrastructure being transferred out of the Service.
2. This transfer left an important void in the Service's abilities to produce and disseminate scientific information through inhouse publications and through refereed journals.
3. Loss of the Service's publishing capacity and publishing infrastructure was overlooked sometimes; instead concern and discussion focused on loss of the Service's research capacity and infrastructure.
4. When loss of the Service's publishing capacity and publishing infrastructure was recognized as important, the loss was often thought not to be a high priority.

Nonetheless, the Service continues to recruit, employ and retain well-qualified scientists; many of them participate in scientific investigations and research in a variety of programs and facilities, including: Fish Technology Centers, Conservation Genetics Laboratories, Fish Health Centers, and National Wildlife Refuges, and under the auspices of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and in other places across the Service. The extent of this participation in scientific investigations was documented in 2005 in a survey conducted by the U. S. Geological Survey of more than 1200 Service employees who performed research. Results of that survey are available at http://www.fort.usgs.gov/products/publications/21528/21528.pdf.

Many Service employees continue to turn to professional journals and *ad hoc* in-house publications to disseminate the results of their work. However, some scientists still maintain low profiles and harbor concerns about being discouraged from conducting research. Many are simply content to gather information without concern for sharing or disseminating it. Across the agency, absence of clear support for publishing and disseminating scientific information frustrates our scientists, erodes professionalism, and lowers morale. This significantly affects the Service's ability to accomplish its conservation mission, assist its partners, and demonstrate the responsible use of Federal funds.

Key Findings
1. The Service continues to employ a significant number of scientists who engage in research and who want to publish their data and findings.
2. Service scientists sometimes publish in professional journals, but typically they publish in inhouse Service publications, most of which do not require peer review or standard protocols.
3. Service scientists would welcome management support to expand the Service's capacity to publish and disseminate scientific information through outlets that have appropriate standards for policy review, peer review and editorial review.
4. Additional support to expand the Service's capacity to publish and disseminate scientific information would help the Service accomplish its conservation mission and would improve employee morale and performance, and recruitment and retention of employees.

Identify suitable publication outlets for Service scientists.
The fact that Service scientists have continued to disseminate information opportunistically through a variety of means should be applauded; it speaks strongly to their professionalism and resourcefulness. At the same time, Service leaders need to recognize that some of the means used to disseminate information no longer meet applicable standards, such as for scientific conduct or peer review. They also need to appreciate that those opportunistic approaches vary considerably across Service regions, as does organizational support and encouragement for publishing and disseminating scientific information.

The sense of confusion surrounding Service publications becomes evident when one considers that the Service has approximately 64 different periodicals or serials that have an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). Approximately 40 of these are denoted as "current" by the ISSN International Centre, although some of them are rarely used by Service scientists. Nonetheless, some Service serials or variations of them are still in use today, although their use and their publication processes, including format, rigor of review, and dissemination vary widely among Regions and Programs.

To help promote consistency and efficiency within the Service as a whole, the Service needs to make sure its scientists have access to the right mix of publication outlets, including in-house serials and primary journals, and the right kind of publications infrastructure, procedures and policies to meet the requirements of these outlets. As part of this process, the Service needs to identify a limited

number of serials that its scientists should use and then issue standards to guide the use of those serials. Having fewer serials but expanding the scope of scientific information that would be appropriate for each kind of serial would help the Service save money and would make more sense than maintaining a larger number of more selective serials or starting an entirely new set of serials. In addition, the use of existing serials, when appropriate, would help maintain continuity and historical perspective.

At the same time, the Service needs to encourage its scientists to make efficient use of primary journals. It should not attempt to reinvent or replace the extensive number of primary journals in which its scientists currently publish. Instead, the Service should encourage its scientists to use those journals wherever possible. When those primary outlets do not lend themselves to the kinds of scientific information Service scientists wish or need to disseminate, the Service should provide additional alternative outlets to help disseminate scientific information.

For both primary journals and alternative outlets, the Service should provide clear guidelines for its scientists that encourage publishing and dissemination of scientific information and help direct its scientists to publication outlets that are suited well to the kind of scientific information they want to disseminate. These guidelines should accompany clear policy that ensures appropriate editorial review, peer review and policy review.

Key Findings
1. Service scientists have been resourceful in taking opportunistic approaches to publishing and disseminating scientific information.
2. Service scientists exist in an organizational climate that lacks a national infrastructure and national policy that support publishing.
3. Service scientists and the Service would benefit from having:

a. an appropriate mix of publications outlets;
b. clear policy that brings consistency and certainty to the publications process; and
c. clear policy that encourages publishing and makes it an organizational priority.

With some minor modifications, five extant Service serials, in addition to external primary journals, are adequate to capture the majority of the publication needs for the Service (see Appendix 1), although additional serials may eventually become necessary. Acceptable formats for these serials should be as broad as possible without compromising their integrity and identity.

The Committee recommends the Service use the following serials:

- ***Research Information Bulletins*** (RIBs) and ***Fact Sheets*** are relatively simple one- or two-page flyers that cover all aspects of natural resource science to inform others about the final or interim results of recently completed and ongoing studies, new techniques, or new information useful to a variety of audiences, including resource managers, scientists, and the general public. Timely interim information is often provided for long term studies, or as more readable and accessible synopsis of more in-depth publications.

- ***Resource Publications*** are typically longer (e.g., 5-15 pages) "bound" publications that provide timely dissemination of data and information. This series provides for interim data dissemination for long term projects, often to local managers and for inclusion in larger agency databases. Data analyses are minimal and data interpretation is limited. Topics include biological surveys or inventories, notes on species distribution, migration, or occurrence, weir data, workshop proceedings, field guides, and handbooks. Audiences are typically scientists and resource managers.

- ***Fish and Wildlife Technical Reports*** contain in-depth articles on scientific research on almost any natural resources topic. These publications are generally analogous to traditional primary journal articles. However, this series is meant to be more inclusive than primary journals for aspects such as length and format; rigor of review is similar, albeit more flexible as size, complexity or influence of a manuscript warrants. Studies may be experimental or descriptive research, theoretical treatments, reports on technical issues or literature reviews and syntheses. All scientific data is statistically analyzed, and the relevance of the results is discussed in detail. This series allows Service scientists to publish their work in an outlet with scientific stature and rigorous review standards, even when it does not "fit" other primary journal formats. Audiences are typically scientists and resource managers.

- ***North American Fauna*** series is a long-standing and prestigious outlet for monographs of long-term research on faunal and floral life histories, distributions, population dynamics, taxonomy, and community ecology. While submissions to this series are relatively small in number, they are often classic pieces of work that may summarize full careers of knowledge and expertise on various topics. Furthermore, these monograph type publications, while information rich, are difficult to place in other publication outlets, often due to overall length.

- ***External Peer Review Primary Journals*** publish original research and studies that result in new scientific knowledge. When the formats, timeliness or peer-review process is not appropriate, one of the Service series, described above, may be preferable. Peer review is handled by the individual journals and it should be noted that the process implemented by primary journals *may* or *may not* meet OMB peer review guidelines. In the latter case, Service serials may be more appropriate, as

the peer review process can be designed to meet those guidelines (see next section).

Key Recommendations
1. The Service should use five serials or outlets to publish scientific information created by its employees:
- *Research Information Bulletins and Fact Sheets*
- *Resource Publications*
- *Fish and Wildlife Technical Reports*
- *North American Fauna*
- *Primary Journals*

2. The Service should establish the infrastructure necessary for its employees to use these five serials, especially editorial capabilities (see next section).

Ensure appropriate editorial, policy, and peer review for all Service scientific publications.
The review process should not be made burdensome to the point that it discourages Service scientists from publishing the results of their work. It should be streamlined to the greatest extent possible without compromising quality. It must also be flexible enough to allow time-sensitive information (e.g., results of annual waterfowl breeding-pairs surveys) to be published quickly and to accommodate OMB peer review guidelines when appropriate. The electronic tracking system, described in the next section, will greatly simplify, hasten and streamline the publication process, even though more reviews and approvals may now "officially" be required. There are three types of review for Service publications: Internal, Peer, and Policy (see also Appendix 2).

- Internal Review is required of all publications to ensure correct usage of the English language, conformance with format standards of the intended outlet, and appropriateness for the intended target audience. The Internal Review is equivalent to a basic editorial review, and should be completed and approved at the lowest appropriate level (typically Project or Program Leaders). All publications should receive Internal Review.

- Policy Review is necessary only if Service positions or policies are discussed. However, the necessity for a Policy Review will be determined for *all* publications by the official responsible for approvals at the Internal Review level. Authority to conduct Policies Reviews should be delegated to the greatest extent possible, but no lower than to project leader or station supervisors. The purpose of the review is to ensure that all discussions or interpretations of agency policy accurately reflect the official policies and positions and (as appropriate) are based on a firm legal foundation. When deemed necessary, Policy Reviews can be conducted by senior managers, like Assistant Regional Directors, Regional Directors, Assistant Directors, or the Director (as appropriate), at times in consultation with Regional or Washington Office solicitors (as necessary). In the vast majority of cases, this review is anticipated to require minimal time and effort.

- Peer Review is required for *Fish and Wildlife Technical Reports* and *North American Fauna* publications and is for the most part analogous to traditional peer review conducted by primary journals. The purpose of peer review is to maintain a high degree of credibility in, and integrity of, agency science and the scientific process by ensuring that: 1) field and laboratory methods are appropriate, methods of data analysis are clearly described, scientifically defensible, and relevant to the objective, 2) the results are presented clearly and unambiguously, and 3) conclusions or management recommendations are reasonable and fully supported by the results. A typical peer review would involve a Coordinating Editor selecting several subject-matter experts to provide peer reviews. The rigor (e.g., number of reviewers, reviewers internal or external to the Service, etc.) and transparency (e.g., anonymous or public reviews) of the process may be modified as appropriate based on the size or complexity of a manuscript and specifically to accommodate OMB Peer Review guidelines for "influential" and "highly influential" scientific assessments. This can readily be accomplished through specialized security permissions established at the beginning of the electronic submission process (see next section) for each publication.

Key Recommendations
1. Review processes should be required, but streamlined to the greatest extent possible.
2. Review processes should focus on three types of reviews:
- *Internal Review, which would largely be editorial;*
- *Policy Review; and*
- *Peer Review*

3. Review processes should be designed to meet the needs of the Information Quality Act and OMB and DOI standards for peer review and scientific conduct.

Provide a streamlined Web-based system for the Service publication process and dissemination of all publications.
Efficient, effective and widespread dissemination of information is a key component in the publication policy for the Service. The Service *must* provide a system to conveniently provide its products to end users, whether they are resource managers, scientists or the members of the general public. Making all Service publications accessible via a searchable database on the Internet is a significant step towards increased accountability, efficiency, and responsible use of Federal funds.

Furthermore, the technology currently exists to design a state-of-the-art electronic tracking system for the entire process, from the first submission to the final publication, and everything in between. An almost completely paperless process is possible,

similar to the review and publication processes adopted by many leading primary journals, such as the American Fisheries Society publications. These systems allow for electronic tracking of submissions, reviews, reviewer solicitation and selection, reviews and responses, public comments (where applicable), and dissemination of the final documents. Various specialized security permission structures can be invoked to make some, or all, of the review process transparent *or* confidential, as deemed appropriate. As such, it will be particularly useful for implementation of OMB guidelines for peer review, and yet will also allow for completely anonymous review when appropriate.

The foundation of the tracking process for all Service publications will be an updated web-based transmittal form, modified from the hard copy form that still exists from pre-NBS days; all signatures and routing will now be electronic. The technology will "force" the submitting author through the standard protocols for publication, further simplifying and standardizing the process. A rough draft of the transmittal form is given in Appendix 3. The form is formatted here as if on paper, but the ultimate "look and feel" and routing procedures will be determined later as specifics for routing, approvals, reviews, signatures, drop down menus, open fields, etc. are determined.

Key Recommendations
1. The Service should build as much of its publication infrastructure as possible on the Internet, to facilitate access and achieve efficiencies in disseminating scientific information.
2. The Service should design or acquire a state-of-the-art electronic tracking system to help manage its publication process.
3. The Service should develop a web-based transmittal form that its scientists can use to submit information for publishing and managers can use to track the status of submissions as they progress through the review processes and through actual publishing.

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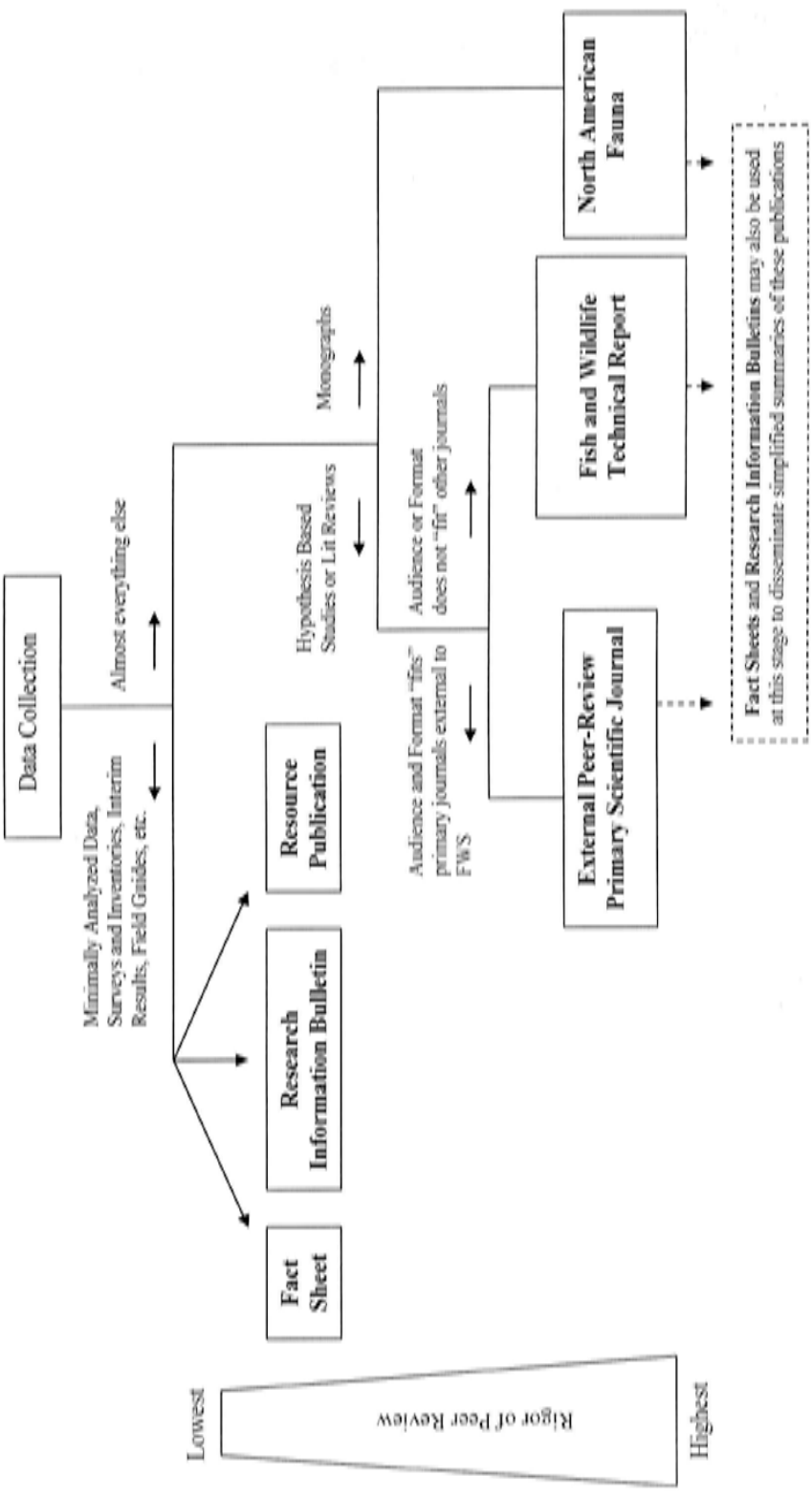
Appendix 1. Flow Chart for Disseminating Scientific Informationa



Appendix 2. Summary of Review Procedures for Publication Outlets

	Fact Sheet	*Research Information Bulletin*	*Resource Publication*	*Fish and Wildlife Technical Report*	*North American Fauna*	*External (non-FWS) Primary Journals*
INTERNAL REVIEW						
(1) Required?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(2) Level of review approval required.	Project Leader or Program Supervisor	Project Leader or Program Supervisor	Project Leader or Program Supervisor	Project Leader or Program Supervisor	Project Leader or Program Supervisor	Project Leader or Program Supervisor
(3) Purpose of review.	Basic editorial review, ensure correct usage of the English language, conformance with format standards of the intended outlet, and appropriateness for the intended target audience.					
POLICY REVIEW						
(1) Required?						
Service Policy *not* discussed*	No	No	No	No	No	No
Service Policy discussed*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(2) Level of review approval required.						
Regional policy/issue	ARD or RD	ARD or RD	ARD or RD	ARD or RD	ARD or RD	ARD or RD
National policy/issue	AD or D	AD or D	AD or D	AD or D	AD or D	AD or D
(3) Purpose of review.	Ensure that all discussions or interpretations of Regional or National policy accurately reflect the official policies and positions of the Service and (as appropriate) are based on a firm legal foundation.					
PEER REVIEW						
(1) Required?	No (maybe in rare cases)	No (maybe in rare cases)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, as determined by journal
(2) Level of review approval required.	Service Coordinating Editor	Service Coordinating Editor	Service Coordinating Editor	Service Coordinating Editor	Service Coordinating Editor	Determined by journal
(3) Purpose of review.	Maintain a high degree of credibility in, and integrity of, agency science and the scientific process by ensuring that: 1) field and laboratory methods are appropriate, methods of data analysis are clearly described, scientifically defensible, and relevant to the objective, 2) the results are presented clearly and unambiguously, and 3) conclusions or management recommendations are reasonable and fully supported by the results. Ensure compliance with OMB peer review guidelines for influential and highly influential assessments where applicable.					Determined by journal – does not *necessarily* comply with OMB peer review guidelines for influential assessments.

Appendix 3. Example of Online Based Transmittal Form

Dept. of Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Publication Transmittal Form	Tracking #: Date received:

1. Title	2. Authors (s)

3. Originating Facility	4. Contact Person	5. Contact Information Phone ( ) - ext. email

6. Manuscript Deadline (reason)	7. Proposed Outlet

8. Intended Audience (s): _____ General _____ Semi-technical _____ Technical	9. Publication consists of (#): _____ Pages _____ Tables _____ Figures Figures include: _____ Graphs _____ Photographs

10. Author's Certification:
This publication DOES / DOES NOT (circle one) relate to the policies or sensitive issues of the Service or the Department, or other Federal or State Agencies (Explain under "16. REMARKS" below if "DOES" is circled). This publication meets professional standards of organization of material, analysis of data, interpretation of results, and formulation of conclusions and recommendations. All citations and quotations have been checked and are exact, and the publication complies with the format and style of the proposed outlet. All similarities between this publication and others have been identified to the editor(s) of the proposed outlet.

Signature_____ Date_____
Title_____

11. Peer Review: The following persons have provided review of the attached publication:

NAME	TITLE	AFFILIATION	DATE
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

12. Project Leader's Certification:
This publication addresses the data obtained, is technically sound, and provides appropriate and sound conclusions. Policy and sensitive issues have been addressed.

Signature_____ Date_____
Title_____

13. Program Supervisor's Certification: (This block is only applicable when another supervisor exists between immediate supervisor and ARD). The concerns of this office, as well as any policy or sensitive issues, have been addressed.

Signature_____ Date_____
Title_____

14. Assistant Regional Director's Certification:
I have reviewed the attached publication and certify that it is properly addresses policy or sensitive issues of the Service or Department.

Signature_____ Date_____
Title_____

15. Additional Certifications (if warranted):

Signature	Title	Date

16. This publication IS / IS NOT (circle one) expected to be considered INFLUENTIAL or HIGHLY INFLUENTIAL (circle one) as per the OMB Peer Review guidelines.

Remarks:
_____
_____
_____