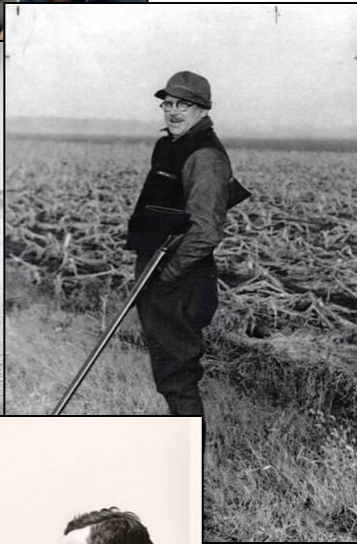


Career Pathways to Senior Leadership



National Wildlife Refuge System *Leadership Pathways Report*

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Front cover (clockwise from top):

Future conservation leaders from West Virginia and Alaska; past National Wildlife Refuge System leaders Jay N. (Ding) Darling; Ira Gabrielson; J. Clark Salyer; Rachel Carson; Paul Kroegel (center).

January 2010

FOREWORD

Have you ever considered striving for senior leadership¹ positions within the National Wildlife Refuge System? It certainly sounds exciting and challenging, but perhaps you wonder if the benefits of climbing higher on the career ladder are worth having to shift away from delivering conservation “on the ground?” Perhaps it is hard to imagine the big move to a regional office or Washington, D.C., and how your lifestyle could change. Or you may even ponder the extent to which senior leadership really influences what the Refuge System already accomplishes.

In fact, the Refuge System’s leadership plays a critical role in shaping budgets, conservation priorities and organizational direction, not only for the Refuge System but for the entire U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As a part of the premier wildlife and land conservation agency in the world, senior leaders are able to tangibly influence conservation at a national, and sometimes international, scale. Needless to say, senior leadership positions are truly exciting and rewarding. Senior leaders also have a surprising level of influence on individual employees’ job satisfaction and performance. The 2009 [*Best Places to Work in the Federal Government Report*](#) revealed that the primary driver of employee job satisfaction is effective leadership. An agency’s senior leadership, in particular, was found to have the greatest impact on an individual’s satisfaction with their work environment.

In the coming years, the Refuge System will face some daunting personnel challenges. A massive wave of Baby Boomer retirements is on the very near horizon, with 1 in 5 employees planning to retire by 2014 and nearly 45% by 2020. Retirements will disproportionately be taken by our most experienced staff, including people in Washington (28% of Headquarters staff will retire by 2014), the regional offices (26%), and refuge managers (24%). Because this retirement wave will take with it the Refuge System’s most experienced people, it’s critically important that younger workers aspire to fill what might otherwise be a critical shortage of leaders and managers. If you are someone who hopes to achieve senior leadership, the timing has never been better for you to achieve that lofty aspiration.

The practical advice presented in this report was gleaned from the substantial expertise of members of the National Wildlife Refuge System *Leadership Pathways Team*, which was composed of Service leaders that serve in senior or executive leadership positions. Please see *Appendix A* for a list of members and the methods used to gather and prioritize information for this report.

Hopefully, this report will encourage you to proactively consider your career path, what you wish to accomplish, and how you can leave a mark on wildlife and land conservation. The Refuge System is filled with bright, motivated individuals who can make a positive difference in accomplishing not only refuge conservation and education goals, but also the broader Service mission.

¹ The Service’s Leadership Competency Development Model separates Senior Leaders (GS-13/14) from Executive Leaders (GS-15/SES). But in this report the term “senior leadership” refers to GS-14s, GS-15s, and Senior Executive Service positions.

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As you envision your career ahead, we encourage you to strive for the senior leadership ranks, where you can enjoy a rewarding career, create lasting friendships with many others who share your interests, and help lead an agency that has a laudable mission. With your leadership and vision, and help from our many partners, the Refuge System can capitalize on today's conservation opportunities while responding thoughtfully to the pressing challenges. We hope you will accept our challenge to strive for senior leadership positions and make a positive difference for the Refuge System, for America's conservation legacy, and for yourself.

In My Experience . . .

From 1995 to 2000, I worked in the Washington office in what was then called the Partners for Wildlife Program and later for the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS). My field experience had been in these Service programs and I wanted to get a better understanding of both. Actually, I wanted to better understand our entire agency and so Headquarters seemed like the best place to be. My Partners program job was to provide technical assistance to USDA's Farm Services Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service. Specifically, I was tasked with helping to make the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) better for wildlife – the third leg to soil erosion and water quality protection as required by the 1996 Farm Bill. I saw how other agencies function while at the same time helping to create practices for farm land that would provide improved habitat on millions of U.S. acres.

As I was working on CRP, the NWRS Improvement Act was working its way through Congress. After the law was signed by President Clinton in 1997, it became important to let Service employees nationwide know of its historic significance. I was very fortunate to be teamed up with individuals that were very knowledgeable about the law, and we traveled the country discussing the importance of the Refuge System's first organic legislation.

These two experiences were wonderful on their own but then a third opportunity came along that really rounded out my time in DC. I was asked to fill a void in the Congressional and Legislative Affairs Office after a staff departure. Originally scheduled for just a month, the detail turned into over 6 months, which provided me the chance to work with Congressional staff on legislation and other issues impacting the Refuge System.

Overall, my time in Washington was just what I went for – a wide-angle view of the Refuge System and the Service, its functions, issues and employees. It was a great experience! Looking back, I was involved in several nationally significant efforts, maybe because I was in the right place at the right time (or maybe because I was one of the few wearing a tie), but now I think it was because opportunities to do great things just exist there.

*Mendel Stewart, Project Leader
San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex*

INTRODUCTION

If you are interested in—or even just curious about—what it takes to earn senior leadership positions within the Refuge System, this report is for you. It provides guidance and resources on how to develop professionally. More specifically, this report will:

- ✓ Detail the knowledge, skills and characteristics needed to become an effective leader.
- ✓ Offer useful guidance on how to maximize your own leadership potential.
- ✓ Inform you of available leadership development courses and resources.
- ✓ Share potential career pathways to Refuge System leadership positions.

There are many opportunities and resources available to help you become an effective senior leader, and just as many career pathways that can lead you there. No two paths are the same: while many individuals begin their career at a field station and gain broader, national experience over time, others may begin in Washington or a regional office and gain important field experience along the way. Some stay within the Refuge System their entire career; others try different Service programs, such as Ecological Services or Migratory Birds, or even gain valuable experiences outside the Service. To demonstrate this career path diversity, the careers of three different leaders are mapped out in Pathways to Leadership *Spotlights* throughout this report.



Just as the many braids of a meandering Alaska river flow together to form a channel more united and powerful, so too are there many possible routes to becoming a senior leader in the Refuge System. Find the “braid” that is right for you and then work to achieve your goals while enjoying and learning from every twist and turn of your own meandering river.

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Despite the seemingly countless possible routes to leadership, there are common and essential elements that all employees should consider as they begin to sketch their career path. Actively engaging in the four broad activities described below will help you gain the competencies needed to be an effective leader. The remainder of this report will provide specific information and guidance related to realizing your leadership potential.



Self-awareness. To chart a path toward leadership, you first must become familiar with what the Service calls “[mission-critical competencies](#).” These describe the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for effective senior leadership. Functionally, the competencies serve as a guide for your professional development: review the competencies, gauge your own aptitude, and identify opportunities for improvement. It will be important to be fully honest about your own managerial and technical abilities in order to prioritize any needed experiences or training.



Diverse on-the-job experience across the field, regional, and Washington offices. The diverse experiences that are critical to developing the skills and relationships needed to be an effective leader can be gained a number of ways:

- Relocating to take new jobs
- Details (long- or short-term)
- Temporary job swaps
- Shadowing
- Special assignments



Mentoring relationships. Maintaining professional, friendly relationships with colleagues you consider to be mentors is a worthwhile effort. As evidence, *all* members of the Leadership Pathways Team had important and inspirational mentors who helped them along their career path.



Training courses and programs. Ongoing, active learning and networking are essential aspects of your professional development. Ample opportunities for training are available both within and outside the Service.

Pathways to Leadership *Spotlight*

Greg Siekaniec

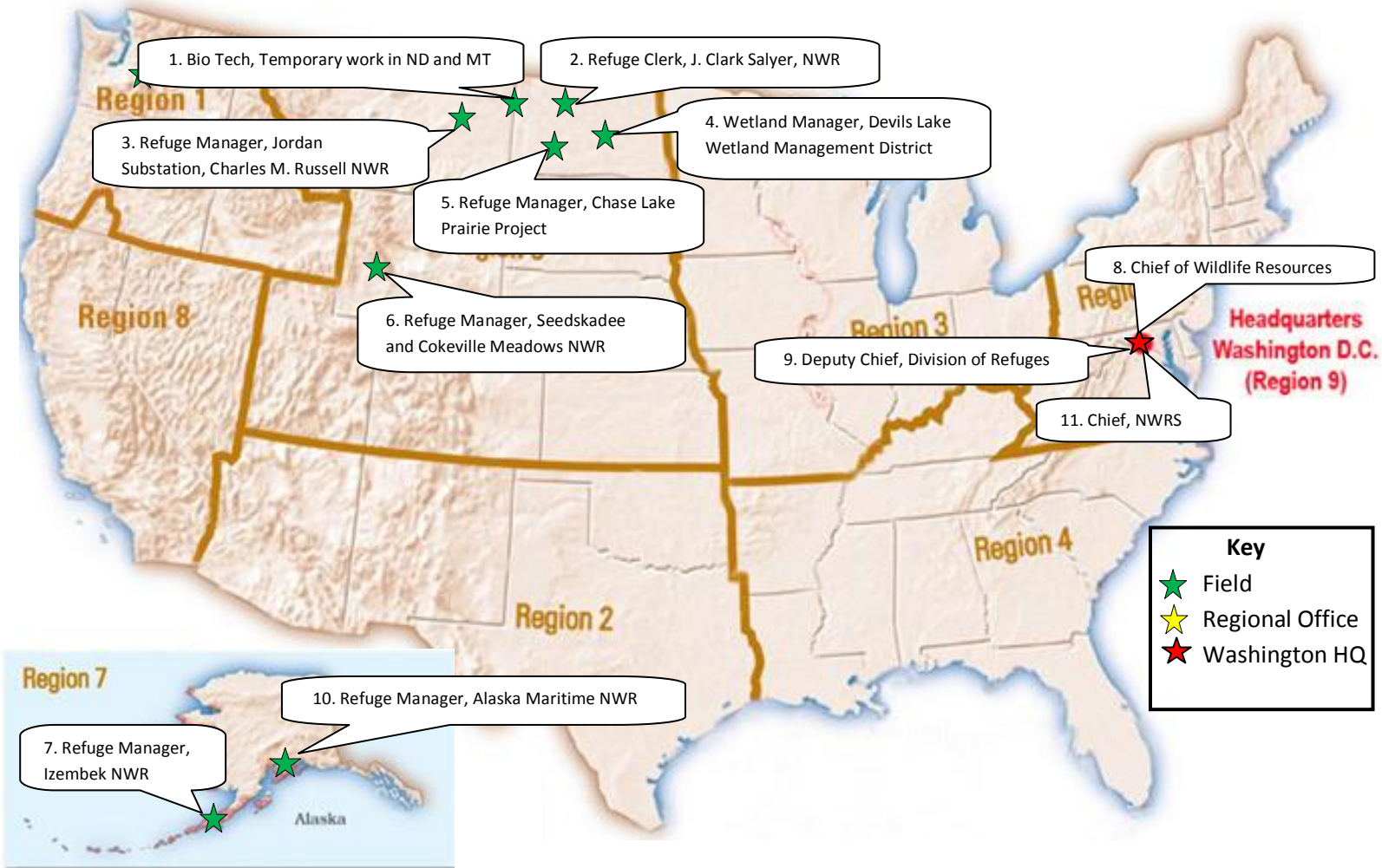
Number of positions held: 11

Number of locations lived: 9

Current position: Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System



Leadership Advice: When a decision turns out to be ineffective or wrong, be prepared to correct the error and look for resolution. Take the “heat” off employees every chance you get if it involves decisions or ideas you promoted. Recognize and reward employees and celebrate successes. Develop an interest in all program areas so you build strength in the entire organization.

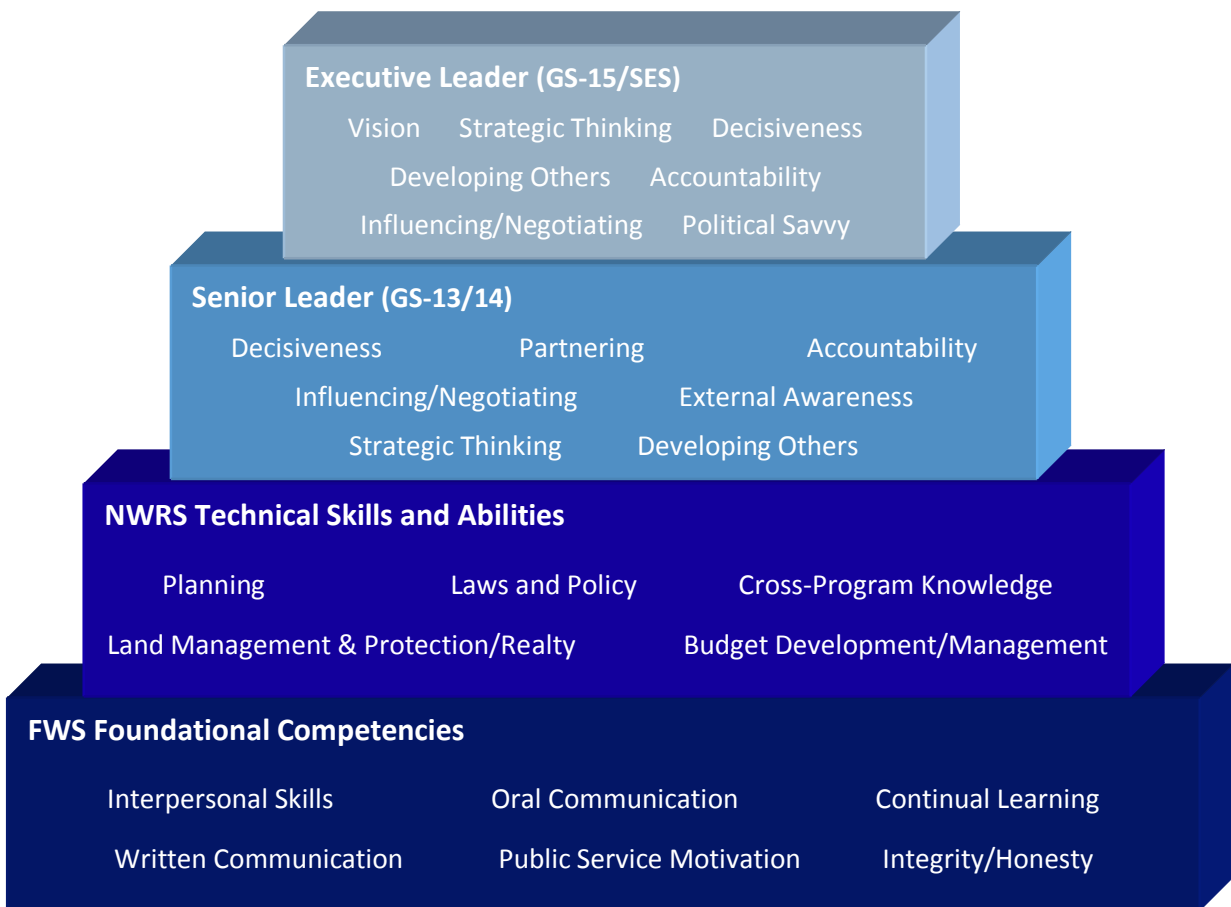


Career Advice: Think before you speak, and don't be afraid to speak from your heart about your conservation convictions. Know your critic's issue better than they do. Respect all individual points of view even if you disagree. Wear your ethics, integrity, and honesty “on your sleeve.” And keep learning!

LEADERSHIP DEFINED

What? In order to maximize your potential, you first need to understand what’s necessary for effective leadership. The Service created a [Leadership Competency Development Model](http://training.fws.gov/LED/competencymodel/index.html) (<http://training.fws.gov/LED/competencymodel/index.html>) that details many of the skills and characteristics (i.e., “competencies”) you’ll need to advance and succeed. This model, in conjunction with Refuge System-specific skills, describes what is expected of all Refuge System leaders.

How? The graphic below depicts the various competencies that contribute to effective leadership performance in the Refuge System. *Appendix B* defines each of these competencies and provides behavioral examples that demonstrate what they look like in action. Familiarize yourself with these important leadership behaviors to better understand what it takes to become a Refuge System leader.



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Why? What do these competencies mean in your real-world practice of wildlife conservation and interacting with diverse people and views? You, like other Refuge System employees, work as part of a team to accomplish the agency's objectives, and possessing the competencies described earlier is central to meeting our mission. Only through exceptional leadership at all levels can we meet the increasingly complex challenges facing our agency.

A Great Leader

The Leadership Pathways Team believes that strong leadership equates to possessing the knowledge and skills described in the Service's competency model, combined with a strong personal ethic and commitment to the wildlife and land we are entrusted to protect.

Specifically, a great leader . . .

- ✓ Is aware of personal strengths and weaknesses, and is receptive to feedback.
- ✓ Demonstrates integrity, honesty and fairness at all times, even when pressured.
- ✓ Demonstrates decisiveness – the ability to make tough decisions impartially, while understanding the different perspectives inherent in most any issue.
- ✓ Is a strong communicator; is approachable and listens to understand.
- ✓ Recognizes and models the uniqueness and value of public service.
- ✓ Motivates and enables staff to do their job to the best of their ability. Fosters employees' professional development to advance the mission of the agency.
- ✓ Relies on a collaborative approach – recognizes the value of all partners and functions as a team player whenever possible.
- ✓ Instills a positive vision for the future and obtains staff buy-in to promote that vision.
- ✓ Leads from behind and by example.

Keep in mind that developing a full repertoire of leadership skills is easier said than done; ask any of our current senior leaders. In fact, many of these abilities take a significant amount of time and focused attention to develop. The Leadership Pathways Team noted that three of the qualities that are most challenging to develop are: 1) communicating effectively across levels – both inside and outside of the organization, 2) working as a team with individuals outside of the Refuge System in order to build and promote a “One Service” organization, and 3) developing self-awareness to build leadership competence. Developing self-awareness is particularly important for individuals trying to develop leadership skills.

SELF-AWARENESS THROUGH SELF-ASSESSMENT

What? Knowing yourself and your aptitudes and tendencies is key to personal and professional development. Once you are familiar with the knowledge and skills necessary for leadership, the next step is to critically self-evaluate. Being aware of your abilities will help you take advantage of your strengths, address weaknesses, and better understand how coworkers or partners may perceive you.

Why? Self-awareness is an ongoing process and is usually not easy. Acknowledging areas of weakness or unattractive tendencies requires both honesty and courage. Even more difficult is working to improve skills that may not come naturally. Nevertheless, making a purposeful effort at understanding yourself and improving your weaknesses while capitalizing on your strengths is crucial, whether you aim to become more effective and respected at your current level or aspire to senior leadership positions.

Leadership Derailed

While always striving to develop positive leadership attributes, also be aware of characteristics that derail leaders:

- Ego
- Poor listener
- Negative attitude
- Intolerance
- Fear of failure, risk or rejection
- Overly critical
- Controlling/micromanaging
- Inconsistent
- Wanting to always be liked

Leadership Advice: *Self-awareness is a key attribute of effective leaders. This involves seeking out and being receptive to input on your strengths, weaknesses and tendencies.*

Opportunities for Self-Assessment

How? There are many opportunities to take a hard look in the mirror and perform a self-assessment. For example, self-assessment is a cornerstone of some of the Service's employee development programs (e.g., [Advanced Leadership Development Program](#)). Such programs offer a great opportunity to critically self-examine, to receive honest feedback from others, and to identify areas for improvement. Other resources to facilitate your self-assessment are:

- Training Courses.** NCTC offers a variety of shorter, open enrollment courses, such as [The Leadership Challenge Workshop](#), which contain self-assessment as a primary component.

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- ❑ **Individual Development Plan (IDP).** View your annual [IDP process](#) as an opportunity to review the Competency Model and think about your strengths and weaknesses in these areas. During this process, work with your supervisor to identify appropriate activities – such as a detail or training course – that will help you develop in target areas.

Leadership Advice:

Think of an IDP as your personal roadmap. Making specific plans for professional development will help you achieve your career aspirations.

- ❑ **Seeking Feedback.** Receiving feedback from others can be an invaluable source of information in your quest for self-awareness. After all, others may be able to identify characteristics or tendencies that are not readily apparent to you. If you feel comfortable doing so, engage those who know you well, such as a supervisor, mentor or peer, to have a candid discussion about your strengths and weaknesses. Such conversations can be difficult for both the feedback giver and receiver: strive to create an open, non-defensive atmosphere where it's clear that others' opinions will not be disputed.

In My Experience . . .

The self-awareness I gained by participating in the Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP) was one of the most important steps in my career. I totally opened myself up to the feedback from the 360-degree assessment and all the instruction on self-awareness. It paid off in a big way. It became clear that people sometimes viewed my words and actions differently than I meant them. Knowing that, I was able to adjust how I interacted with people, both how I listened to people and how I communicated with them. In the end, a lot of it came down to one of the seven habits recommended in Stephen Covey's book (*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*): *Seek first to understand, then to be understood*. I hadn't previously practiced that as well as I should have. I practice it daily now, and it has helped me find several successes I would have otherwise missed.

*Larry Williams, NWRS Division Chief
Budget, Performance, and Workforce*

DIVERSE ON-THE-JOB EXPERIENCE

There is an unwritten but time-tested rule in the Refuge System that senior leadership roles require one to have worked in several jobs and locations in order to gain necessary experiences and perspectives. In other words...you must be highly mobile. This allows people to develop skills in new areas; meet and network with many people; and gain experience in how our mission is carried out across different programs and levels within the Refuge System and across the entire Service.

Know your Leadership Team:
60% of team members have lived in 7 or more locations; all have held 7 or more different positions.

Mobility Survey Results

*I am willing to move **at least once** to achieve my goals:*

- 95% of respondents that aim to ultimately work at the Washington office
- 88% that strive ultimately for the Regional office
- 72% who intend to continue indefinitely on refuges

To better understand employee views about mobility, the Refuge System conducted a survey in summer 2009. The survey revealed that employees are aware of the importance of being mobile, as 52% of respondents were willing to relocate two or more times to achieve their ultimate career goal.

Employees who had participated in training programs such as Stepping Up To Leadership (SUTL) or the Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP) were more likely to have moved one or more times since 2000, as compared to employees who had not participated in these programs.

While the value of working in a variety of locations cannot be overemphasized, we recognize that not all employees are able or willing to relocate multiple times. Such employees should not be automatically precluded from leadership roles, so below we offer guidance on alternative, shorter-term activities that will allow you to gain a wide array of diverse experiences.

Details	Special Assignments
A temporary assignment in a location outside of your regular duty station. Details may take place within a field, regional or the Washington office, and may range from a couple of weeks to more than a year. One month is typical.	A temporary assignment that falls outside of one’s typical duties. A special assignment is often performed while at your permanent duty station. It typically involves working with a group to deliver a specific product.
Job Swaps	Shadowing
An arrangement in which you temporarily assume the duties of another employee while that employee assumes your duties. Job swaps are often used in the Service’s leadership development programs.	An experience in which you learn about a position by following or “shadowing” the incumbent of the position for one or a few days.

Pathways to Leadership *Spotlights*

Tracey McDonnell

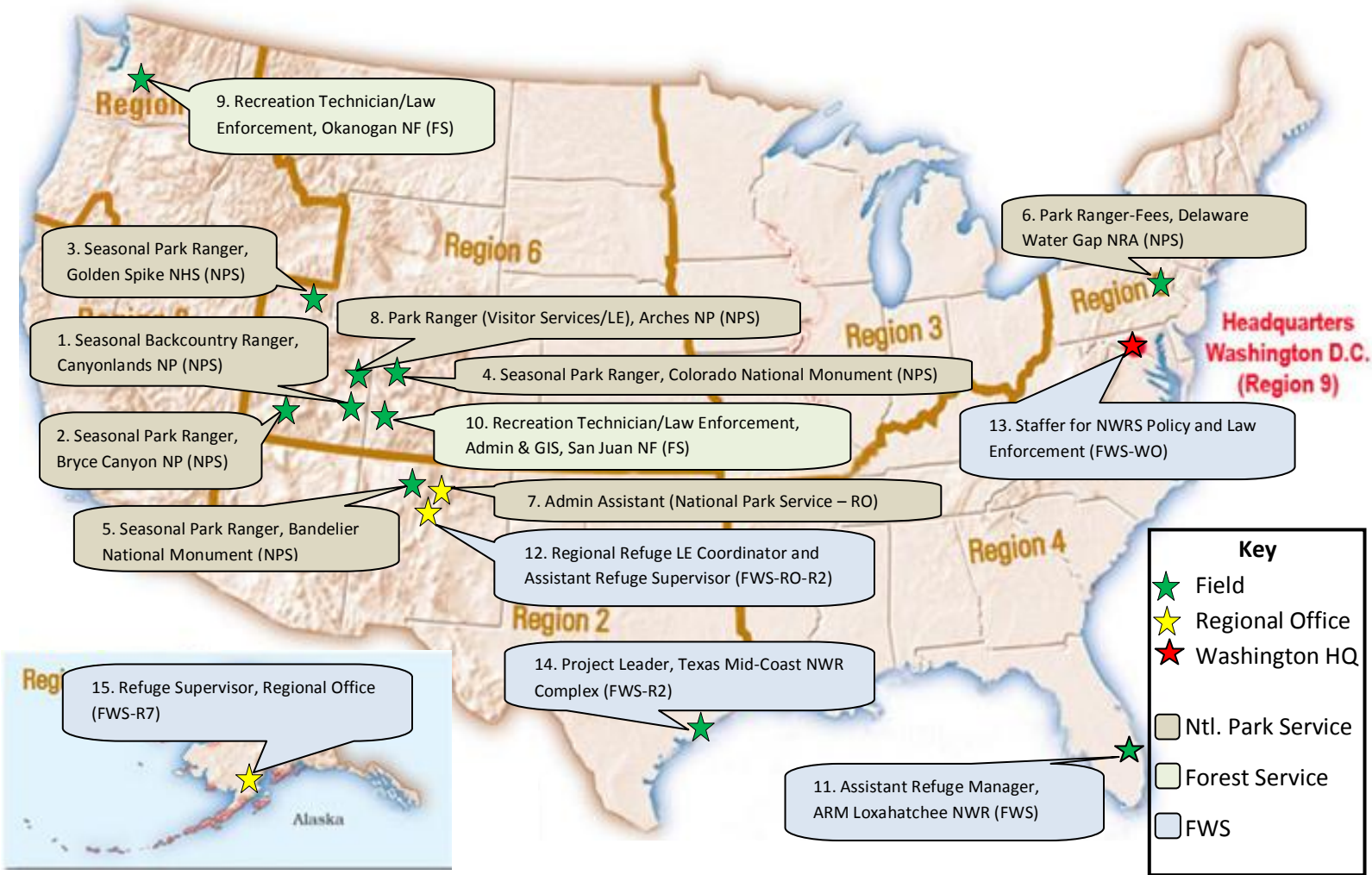
Number of positions held: 19

Number of locations lived: 15

Current position: Refuge Supervisor, Alaska Regional Office



Leadership Advice: As a leader, you must make sure employees have the tools necessary to get the job done, be an advocate for the work they do, and provide guidance when needed. Praise your staff for their work . . . praise tends to be hard to give, but is a wonderful thing to receive. In other words, cover their backs so they can accomplish their work, and they in turn will cover yours and make you shine as their leader!



Career Advice: Move around as much as you can - you really do gain different perspectives and experiences by working at different field stations, regional offices, and the Washington office. You can draw upon these experiences as you move up and into leadership positions. Step up for details and other short-term opportunities. Create and maintain a professional network for yourself.

Details

Why? Details are an easy way to get an array of unique and useful experiences. Obtaining a detail outside of your duty station allows you to see a greater breadth of issues facing our agency, and exposes you to the unlimited talent and ideas of our diverse workforce. When striving for senior leadership positions and to ensure you excel once you get there, it's important to get substantive experience across all levels of the Refuge System, including at a refuge or wetland management district, a regional office and the Washington office. Details with other Service programs (e.g., Migratory Birds or Ecological Services), national or regional non-governmental organizations, or even on Capitol Hill should also be considered. External experiences will give you perspective and understanding of the many partners we interact with, how they operate, and where our missions and daily activities intersect.

How? Individuals who participate in the Service's Advanced Leadership Development Program are required to participate in a detail. Outside of this structured program, however, details are typically obtained in an informal, case-by-case manner.

If you are interested in going on a detail, you should proactively seek one out. First and foremost, discuss with your supervisor how a particular detail would be complementary with your career goals. It is important to gain your supervisor's support, and he or she is likely to have contacts or resources that will help connect you with the right opportunity. You must work out with your supervisor particulars about the costs, including travel and lodging, which in some cases is paid by the host station. You can also ask colleagues, a mentor or other knowledgeable individuals about potential details. Seeking out opportunities from individuals you meet through training or conferences is another useful avenue. The importance of creating and maintaining a professional network in generating developmental opportunities and experiences simply cannot be overstated.

Leadership Advice:

Be proactive in finding details. Participate in developmental details across all levels – the field, regional offices, and the Washington office – as well as other Service programs and even conservation NGOs.

In My Experience . . .

Temporary details are precious opportunities that expand understanding of the manager's role in team dynamics. Near the end of my tour in Tennessee, I was asked if I would be willing to take charge of a refuge in another state. When I arrived I found a refuge in turmoil. The departing refuge manager had deflected responsibility for management inconsistencies back onto refuge staff and now the staff members were suspicious of each other and even worried about their jobs. The employees were searching for stability. They needed to voice their concerns and hear honest answers to tough questions. They needed consistency in management decisions. More than anything else, they needed compassion and understanding about what had transpired.

Helping the staff rekindle the embers of cooperation and learn from this experience was, in fact, a great learning opportunity for me. Although only 2 months, this detail highlighted how a manager can positively or negatively shape employees and their decisions. It emphasized my #1 leadership rule: the transition to leadership includes a shift in thinking, from being responsible and accountable as an individual, to taking responsibility and being accountable to, and for, an entire team.

*Raye Nilius, Project Leader
South Carolina Lowcountry Refuge Complex*

Finding the Right Detail. Effective details have two main things in common – clearly defined objectives and marrying these objectives with your developmental needs. Successful details require advanced planning and preparation, including coordination with both your supervisor and the host station. Consider the following advice to maximize your detail experience:

- ❑ Hold open discussions with your host station or organization to make sure everyone is clear about the objectives and expectations of the detail. It is of utmost importance that your host has specific tasks or projects for you during your time at the detail location. A strong developmental detail should involve some of the following:
 - ✓ Collaboration with others, including people in other geographical or programmatic areas of the Service, Interior Department, other federal or state agencies, NGOs, or on Capitol Hill
 - ✓ Supervisory responsibilities (especially if you are not currently a supervisor)
 - ✓ Learning a new technical skill, for example: budget formulation, comprehensive conservation planning, or becoming educated on climate change adaptation strategies
 - ✓ Project with defined responsibilities that results in a final product or outcome
 - ✓ Decision-making, an important quality in any leader

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- ❑ If you are looking to develop your leadership potential, try to obtain “stretch” assignments that reach you beyond your current level of responsibilities. Those that expose you to a new topic area outside your area of expertise are useful, as well.
- ❑ Since developing leadership qualities and becoming proficient at new skills takes time, details of 60-90 days work best for leadership development purposes, though 30-day details are still useful in many circumstances.

Regardless of whether you are striving to develop leadership skills or simply experience the agency from a new perspective, it is essential that the tasks and outcomes offered by a specific detail match your personal and professional objectives.

Leadership Advice: *Strive to seek out details that challenge you in a new environment, program, or level of responsibility. Only by stepping out of your comfort zone will you grow as a leader!*

In My Experience . . .

My detail experiences were challenging and stretched my comfort level, while also giving me a new perspective on things. In many details, I worked on a specific project that resulted in tangible products/outcomes – this allowed me to show what I accomplished during the detail.

In the early to mid-1990s, I served as the Chief of the Division of Realty for the Service. My immediate boss (also a friend and a mentor) was the Deputy Assistant Director for Refuges and Wildlife, William Hartwig. He offered my name to serve as Deputy Regional Director in an acting assignment in the Region 5 Hadley, Massachusetts office. I was very excited to get the assignment but also very nervous. This was more responsibility than I was comfortable with in a very different job than the one I had as Realty Chief (where I was very comfortable). When I got to Hadley, the Regional Director, Ron Lambertson, was on required travel for much of my time there. He made it clear he was available if needed but that he had confidence I could do the job.

So I spent much of my time in Hadley as the Acting Regional Director. This stretched me far beyond my comfort limits. What really helped though was the support I received from my boss and the Regional Director, as well as the folks in Region 5 who made my experience a great one. Every day was filled with real and important projects and associated experiences.

*Geoffrey Haskett,
Regional Director, Alaska*

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Types of Details. The following table describes and provides examples for the diverse range of details that can contribute to your leadership development. While this is not an exhaustive list, it provides a sampling of the many potential benefits of details.

Type of Detail	Benefits	Examples
Field Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gain appreciation for the unique challenges facing field stations and how issues differ geographically ✓ If you started in Washington or a regional office, a field detail helps you better understand what is being done “on the ground,” which is where the mission is really carried out ✓ Gain understanding of how Refuge System and Service-wide policies are implemented in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Refuge or Refuge Complex ➤ Wetland Management District
Regional Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gain perspective on the unique and important role staff at the regional level play ✓ Learn about the specific issues and controversies that face the refuges across a region ✓ Observe and participate in the complex decision-making and organization that is required at the regional level ✓ Have an opportunity to see cross-regional cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Refuge Supervisor ➤ Regional Refuge Chief ➤ Zone Supervisor ➤ Other admin and program personnel critical to operations
Washington Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gain experience that is <i>critical</i> to leadership positions at the GS-15, SES, and many GS-14 level positions ✓ Gain a national perspective and experience that will almost certainly broaden your understanding of the administrative, management, and biological issues facing the Refuge System ✓ Gain valuable experience in the budget or appropriations cycle ✓ Learn and appreciate how federal legislation influences not only the entire Refuge System but also individual field stations ✓ Participate in policy formulation, including national policy development that influences daily activities ✓ Meet and network with influential and experienced individuals willing to help you grow professionally ✓ Have an opportunity to work directly with major conservation partners, such as various NGOs and the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interior Department ➤ Office of Management and Budget (OMB) ➤ FWS Division of Congressional and Legislative Affairs ➤ NWRS Realty ➤ NWRS Budget, Workforce Planning, and Performance Management ➤ Capitol Hill ➤ Conservation NGOs, including CARE ➤ Administrative and program personnel critical to operations

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Type of Detail	Benefits	Examples
<p align="center">External Organizations/Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ See and appreciate Refuge System issues from an outsider’s perspective ✓ Obtain a deeper understanding of the importance of partnerships and how they enable the Refuge System to accomplish its mission ✓ Learn what other Service programs do, how they do it and how they are relevant or complementary to Refuge System goals ✓ Witness the legislative process and appreciate how congressional decisions affect our agency and its ability to make decisions, pursue opportunities and deliver conservation <p><u>*A Note About External Details.</u> Before pursuing an external detail, it is especially important to consider its relevance to your particular developmental needs.</p> <p>A detail with a national conservation NGO might be particularly relevant for an individual interested in regional or Washington-level leadership jobs. Individuals who are more interested in field positions, on the other hand, may especially benefit from details with another Service program or a state agency.</p> <p>The specific external agencies that are most important and relevant to your development will also depend on what geographical location you are in; for example, a detail with the U.S. Department of Agriculture may be particularly beneficial for individuals working in areas where Farm Bill programs are used on private land or where refuge lands abut National Forests or Grasslands.</p>	<p><u>FWS Programs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Migratory Birds ➤ Endangered Species ➤ Ecological Services ➤ External Affairs ➤ Fisheries ➤ International Affairs <p><u>Other Federal Agencies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ US Army Corps of Engineers ➤ National Park Service ➤ Environmental Protection Agency ➤ US Geological Survey <p><u>Conservation NGOs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Any of the groups comprising CARE ➤ Land trusts <p><u>Capitol Hill:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with congressional committees (e.g., appropriations) <p><u>State Offices:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ State departments of natural resources

In My Experience . . .

I worked at a variety of national wildlife refuges and in different regions before I did a detail in the Regional Office (RO). This 30-day detail was a real eye-opener for me. I interacted with the field on a daily basis, but better understood how their needs/requests were addressed from the RO perspective. I regularly worked with senior leadership and appreciated the level of strategic thinking and visioning that occurs at the regional level. Also, the importance of being decisive was illustrated on a very regular basis, often when problem-solving with field personnel. This experience directly affected my willingness (which previously was staunch *unwillingness*) to move to the RO. Moving to the RO in Hadley was a big move for me because it was a jump from the field to a whole new way of looking at my career.

-- Virginia Rettig, Assistant Refuge Supervisor
Region 5

Special Assignments

Why? Special assignments can be a great opportunity for developing a variety of skills. For example, a special assignment may require you to draft Refuge System policy documents or contribute to Service-wide plans. If you're considering striving for upper levels of senior management, you should prioritize special assignments or other opportunities that offer a big-picture, preferably cross-programmatic perspective.

Special assignments typically provide you with an opportunity to interact with individuals outside of your normal work group; this exposure will play a crucial role in your development as a leader. Working with individuals from other programs allows you to learn about and gain an appreciation for what others within the Service do. In addition, working with new individuals allows you to observe individual work styles and practice your own interpersonal skills, such as negotiation,

Examples of Special Assignments

- ✓ Serve on regional/national teams or working groups to develop organization-wide programs and/or policies
- ✓ Participate in interagency planning, policy development, and negotiation meetings
- ✓ Oversee the development of long range plans and proposals (e.g., proposals for land acquisition)
- ✓ Work on projects dealing with cross-cutting issues

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conflict resolution, and partnership building. Finally, special assignments often provide an opportunity to interact with high-level leaders and can be a great way to meet people from a variety of programs, and thus build and diversify your own professional network.

How? A variety of special assignments may benefit your development, depending on your professional goals. While special assignments are most often presented to an individual (rather than that individual seeking out the special assignment), you can still take proactive steps to indicate your openness and interest in this opportunity. For example, if you are interested in gaining a particular type of skill (e.g., policy development), be sure to discuss this with your supervisor; he or she may know of special assignment opportunities through their connections, or be able to recommend you for a relevant opportunity. Thought should be put into special assignments to ensure that you gain the most value from the assignment.

Job Swaps

Why? Like details, job swaps expose you to new issues, tasks and people. They allow you to experience first-hand the daily responsibilities of a different position, often by firmly placing you outside your comfort zone. One primary benefit of a job swap is that while your new responsibilities may at first seem daunting, the person normally in that position is available to help you along the way. Meanwhile, you remain available to counsel that same person who is temporarily filling your job. In this way, you get the added benefit of both learning and teaching throughout the experience.

How? While there is no formal procedure for obtaining job swaps (outside of those obtained through the Service's ALDP), the general process will be similar to the processes used to obtain details and other developmental assignments. In other words, be proactive and seek out opportunities that are of interest to you. Most importantly, you will need to communicate your desire to participate in a job swap to your supervisor. From there, networking will be invaluable in helping you to find available opportunities.

Shadowing

Why? While it does not give you the hands-on experience of details, special assignments, or job swaps, shadowing allows you to briefly observe the tasks performed, skills required, and general work environment associated with a specific position. Shadowing a senior leader may be particularly beneficial if you are currently in a mid-level position, as this experience will give you a preview of what is required of senior leadership positions.

Shadowing can also be a great opportunity to observe “abstract” leadership competencies, such as “strategic thinking” or “political savvy.” In addition to allowing you to observe these more general

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leadership behaviors, shadowing also gives you a flavor for the typical duties and responsibilities of specific positions (e.g., Refuge Supervisor). This information can be useful in helping you decide what type of detail assignments most interest you or even which jobs you ultimately want to target.

How? If you are interested in shadowing a leader, the first step will be to identify an appropriate person. Generally, individuals with leadership aspirations should aim to shadow somebody in a refuge supervisor position or higher, such as an assistant regional director or division chief in the Washington office. It is important that you arrange the shadowing experience in advance so that your visit occurs on a date when the leader is likely to have interesting and observable activities planned. For example, shadowing on a day when you will be meeting with examiners at the Office of Management and Budget or congressional staff on Capitol Hill will be more beneficial than simply watching the person work on a budget formulation document all day. It is also important to try and plan for a day when the leader is likely to have time to interact and discuss his or her position with you. Advance planning will help to ensure the most developmental and informative shadowing experience possible. Participants in the Stepping Up To Leadership program conduct shadow assignments with Service leaders.

Pathways to Leadership *Spotlights*

Jerome Ford

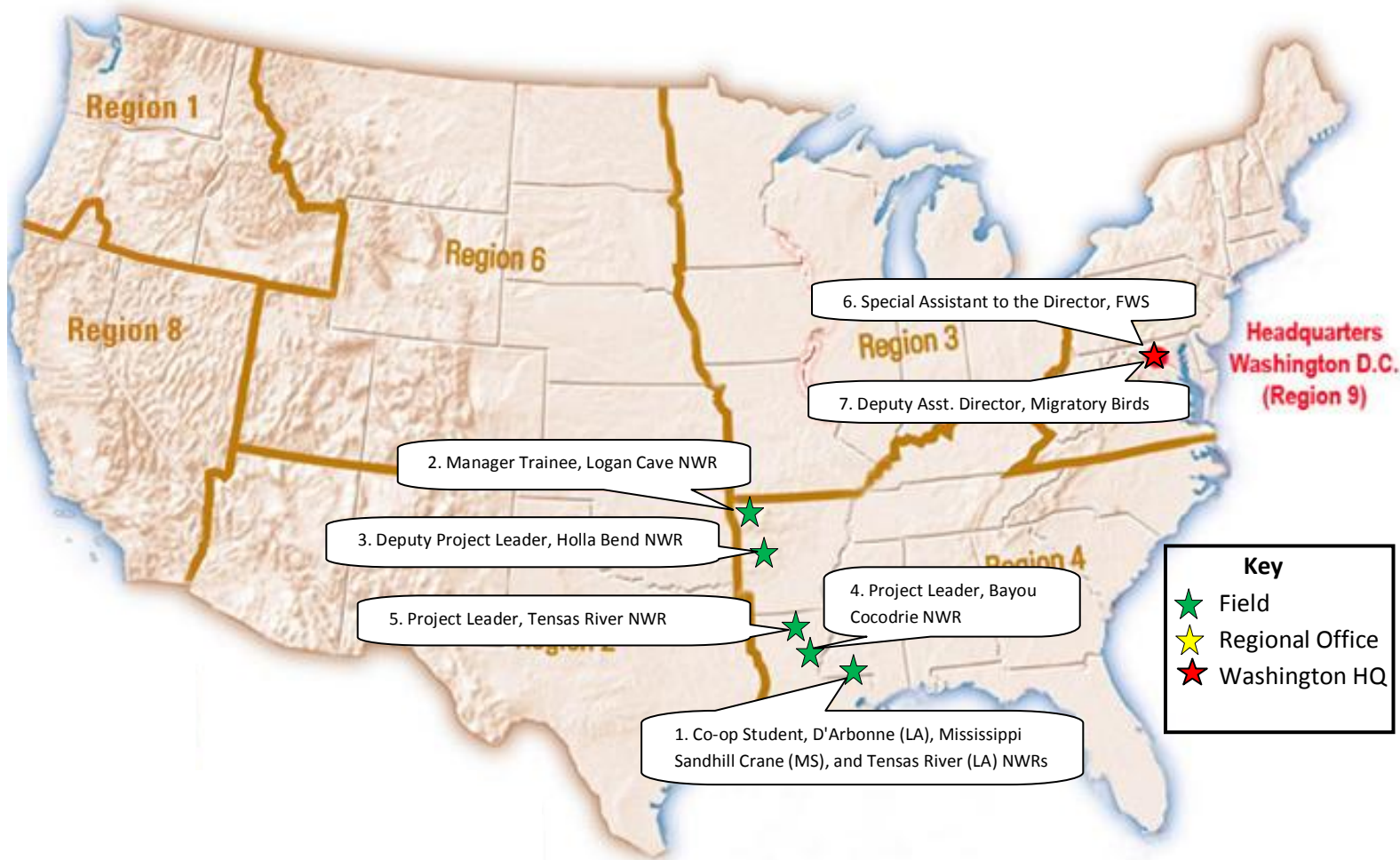
Number of positions held: 9

Number of locations lived: 8

Current position: Deputy Assistant Director, Migratory Birds



Leadership Advice: A great leader displays honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness. A person who constructs this foundation, seals it with professionalism and tops it off with an unlimited amount of passion will surely have people following. Most importantly, be yourself.



Career Advice: Doing what you know to be the right thing is *always* the best thing to do, even if it is not the easiest thing to do. Always make decisions based on the best available information and use a strategy that will yield the best outcome. Importantly, never let anyone tell you that you're not good enough.

MENTORING

What? Mentoring refers to a relationship between two people that benefits the professional development of one or both individuals. *Formal mentoring* occurs within the context of an overall program that pairs mentors with mentees and contains structured goals, expectations and activities (e.g., orientation, training, meetings). *Informal mentoring*, on the other hand, often has no structure or oversight but rather evolves naturally based on friendship or compatibilities between people that are mutually interested in the mentee's development.

Leadership Team Fact:

Mentoring relationships were cited by members of the Leadership Pathways Team as among the most critically important leadership development activities. Each has had at least 2 mentors during their careers.

Why? Establishing a relationship with a more experienced colleague can have a critical impact on your career development. By sharing their wealth of knowledge and experiences, mentors are able to provide you with valuable opportunities and advice. Among other things, a mentoring relationship can benefit you professionally in the following ways:

- ✓ Gain institutional knowledge on how the Service's history and tradition shape the agency today.
- ✓ Get a feel for the traits the Service values in its leaders.
- ✓ Observe specific actions and behaviors that are effective (or ineffective) for leadership.
- ✓ Grow your professional network by tapping your mentor's network.
- ✓ Receive personal guidance regarding how best to achieve your career goals.
- ✓ Observe and participate in how laws, regulations and policies are applied to decision-making.

Lessons Learned from Mentors by the Leadership Pathways Team

- ❖ Take advantage of the tremendous opportunities the Service and Refuge System present by being willing to take on new challenges. Stay open to new possibilities by never pigeon-holing yourself.
- ❖ Be diverse in your detail and job choices; build a strong foundation of experience by working in a variety of jobs at the field level.
- ❖ Take courses on subjects that may be outside of your current job, such as personnel management or realty. Keep learning!
- ❖ Trust yourself - don't be afraid to take chances.
- ❖ Always be honest.
- ❖ Value *people*; without them conservation does not happen.
- ❖ Don't back away from doing what's right. If you do your job well, everything will work out.
- ❖ Don't forget to rely on common sense when working through problems.

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How? Mentoring primarily takes place informally. Because of the informal nature of mentoring within the Refuge System, it is important that you take steps to proactively seek out and form relationships with experienced colleagues you respect and get along with.

Finding a Mentor

Certainly, there are many ways to go about finding a mentor. If you tend to be outgoing and social, finding mentors may be an enjoyable, natural, organic experience for you. If, however, you are

Leadership Advice: *Don't be intimidated to actively seek out mentors: ask questions and seek advice from your more senior colleagues.*

generally introverted, you may need to be more active in finding mentors by asking questions and seeking advice from more senior colleagues. While approaching someone may seem intimidating, you will find that most leaders are interested and willing to assist you with your job- or career-related questions. After all, current Refuge System leaders were once in your shoes and they undoubtedly had the help and mentorship of more senior colleagues along the way.

There are many qualities that make a good mentor. Look for the following qualities in a potential mentor to ensure you get the most from this relationship:

- ✓ Makes time for you; is genuinely interested in your development
- ✓ Willing to share information, experiences, and lessons learned
- ✓ Thinks about the future of conservation; has visionary qualities
- ✓ Willing to take risks and promote their ideas
- ✓ Someone you are comfortable with, and respect and admire
- ✓ Holds a relevant position given your career goals
- ✓ Dedicated to helping make the agency more effective at delivering its mission
- ✓ Active listener
- ✓ Ability to prioritize
- ✓ Honesty/Integrity
- ✓ Well respected
- ✓ Professional
- ✓ Trusting and trustworthy
- ✓ Diversity of experience

Serving as a Mentor

In addition to seeking out potential mentors for yourself, be open to serving as a mentor to more junior employees. Sharing your knowledge and advice will not only help your mentee, but it also will serve as direct leadership practice for you. Being a mentor allows you to develop your own leadership, feedback, and coaching skills. In fact, providing your mentorship to other employees is one of the most important ways you can benefit the Service.

Keep in mind that whether you are the mentor or the mentee, it can take time to build the trust and rapport that is the foundation of a lasting mentoring relationship. The tips provided here are starting points to ensuring an open and beneficial relationship for all parties involved.

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Tips for an Effective Mentoring Relationship	
To be an effective mentee :	To be an effective mentor :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ask thoughtful questions of senior staff. ✓ Maintain a willingness to learn. ✓ Listen and be receptive to constructive criticism or suggestions. ✓ Be honest with yourself and your mentor. ✓ Don't try to mirror someone else's career path; rather, discover your own passions and actively pursue them using the practical guidance a mentor can provide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Share your expertise and institutional knowledge with junior employees ✓ Encourage self-awareness; offer helpful feedback. ✓ Offer encouragement and positive attitude. ✓ Challenge and motivate people. ✓ Facilitate learning of new skills and knowledge. ✓ Be willing to show your weaknesses as well as your strengths.

TRAINING

What? The Service does an excellent job of providing a wide variety of training opportunities to improve your communication, technical and leadership skills. Many leadership courses and programs are offered through the [National Conservation Training Center \(NCTC\)](#) in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. In addition, valuable leadership development courses are offered by a variety of other entities, including the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Relevant leadership development courses are also offered through relevant conservation NGOs, such as [The Wildlife Society's Leadership Institute](#) or the [Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders](#), which both offer opportunities for younger professionals. The [National Conservation Leadership Institute](#) is a competitive program that is suited for the highest-potential leaders at the GS-14 level and above.

Leadership Advice:
Seek out and participate in the many training opportunities that are available to you, both within and outside the agency.

Why? Continuing education is a critical aspect of keeping current on evolving and emerging issues influencing our work, such as climate change or landscape-level planning. While it may appear difficult to teach (or learn) a skill as seemingly abstract as “leadership,” a vast amount of research supports the idea that engaging in leadership training activities has a positive impact on subsequent leadership behavior and skills². For example, effective leadership training can improve your interpersonal skills - such as how to motivate employees or provide effective, useful feedback - that are otherwise not easily learned on the job³. Furthermore, many leadership courses will assist you in

² Avolio, B.J., et al., (2005). 100 year review of leadership intervention research: Briefings report 2004-01, Gallup Leadership Institute, *Leadership Review*, 5, 7-13. (www.leadershipreview.org/2005winter/article1a_winter_2005.asp)

³ Riggio, R.E. (2008). Leadership development: The current state and future expectations. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 60, 383-392.

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identifying and improving your weaknesses while also capitalizing on your strengths. As noted above, the self-awareness gained through this process is invaluable.

How? Please see *Appendix C* for a complete listing of leadership training opportunities, including NCTC courses and leadership development programs, relevant U.S. Office of Personnel Management courses, and additional courses offered through universities and other external organizations. As always, be sure to communicate your training-related needs to your supervisor. You should include specific training interests in your annual Individual Development Plan. Taking steps to think about, discuss, and make plans for your training needs will ensure you develop your leadership capacity to the fullest extent possible.

APPENDIX A: TEAM MEMBERS & PROCESS

Team Members:

NCTC:	Liz Bellantoni
Region 2:	Aaron Archibeque
Region 4:	Raye Nilus
Region 5:	Virginia Rettig
Region 7:	Geoffrey Haskett Tracey McDonnell
Region 8:	Mendel Stewart
Region 9:	Jerome Ford Greg Siekaniec Larry Williams Noah Kahn (Project Manager)

Other Participants:

Division of Human Capital: Dawn Phillips, Region 9

Consultants, Federal Management Partners: Maggie Moore, Jessica Dzieweczynski, Lisa Sper

Team Process

This report was developed with input and ideas provided by the Leadership Pathways Team via conference call, a detailed survey and individual interviews. The survey and follow-up interviews were administered to collect information about:

- The importance of, and opportunity to learn, each of the competencies outlined in the Service's Leadership Competency Development Model
- Gaps and areas for improvement among Refuge System senior leadership
- The specific developmental activities that most contribute to leadership development
- Sample career pathways
- Any resources needed to help facilitate leadership development within the Refuge System
- Barriers to leadership advancement and promotion
- The characteristics of an effective detail
- Tips and guidance for establishing and maintaining effective mentoring relationships
- The specific technical competencies needed for leaders in the NWRS
- Ideas for encouraging participation in leadership development activities

APPENDIX B: LEADERSHIP AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Leadership Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

The following table defines each of the Service’s leadership competencies and provides examples of what these competencies look like in action. You can click on the competency titles to view additional information, including a list of activities that will help you develop skills in these areas.

Service-Wide Senior and Executive Leadership Competencies	Relevant Leadership Behaviors
<p>Accountability: Assures that effective controls are maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds their self and others accountable for rules, responsibilities, and ensuring that projects are completed in a timely manner and within budget. Evaluates plans with a focus on achieving goals and finding positive outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Leads by example ✓ Fair, unbiased decision maker that does not play favorites ✓ Provides oversight and guidance for all refuge programs ✓ Holds oneself accountable for aligning programs with the mission ✓ Ensures management in accordance with refuge purposes ✓ Effectively manages upwards – recognizes when issues need to be escalated and when they don’t – demonstrates internal political awareness
<p>Decisiveness: Exercises good judgment by making well-informed and timely decisions; perceives the implications of decisions; is proactive and outcome-oriented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expected to be the decision maker ✓ Recognizes when a decision needs to be made and does so in a timely manner; doesn’t avoid unpleasant issues that need resolution ✓ Takes thoughtful, calculated risks ✓ Recognizes when it is necessary to reassess past decisions when presented with new or additional information

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<p><u>Developing Others:</u> Encourages the development of others by providing constructive feedback and providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cares for staff by providing opportunities and necessary resources so others may succeed ✓ Follows through on commitments, decisions, etc. ✓ Provides positive mentoring and coaching to staff ✓ Allows staff to problem-solve and learn from their mistakes ✓ Recognizes accomplishments and gives credit to others ✓ Encourages growth through meaningful performance evaluations, thoughtful feedback, opportunities for details and developmental assignments ✓ Continues developing own skills, keeps current, models the importance of continually developing ✓ Avoids burnout and maintains work/life balance – encourages use of annual leave, etc.
<p><u>Influencing/Negotiating:</u> Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; collaborates to accomplish goals; looks for "win-win" situations; maximizes use of resources within regulatory limits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clearly articulates refuge position to a variety of audiences ✓ Strives to build consensus even among diverse interests ✓ Listens sincerely and demonstrates the ability to stand firm when necessary ✓ Develops strong negotiation skills ✓ Communicates reasons for decisions that are made ✓ Understands when to push back on requests, knows when and how to pick appropriate battles
<p><u>Strategic Thinking:</u> Formulates strategies that contribute to the mission, vision, and priorities of the Service. Examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective. Sets priorities while anticipating potential threats and opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Separates the important from the urgent – prioritizes ✓ Demonstrates ability to see the big picture ✓ Looks beyond boundaries for larger context and perspective (e.g., agency, geographical, division, culture) ✓ Has a clear understanding of the Refuge System mission, and the purposes of the refuge ✓ Analyzes tradeoffs and mitigates risks
<p><u>External Awareness:</u> Keeps up-to-date on relevant national and international policies and economic, political, environmental, and social trends that affect the Service. Understands how to be an effective advocate for the Service’s mission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stays informed by keeping lines of communication open ✓ Demonstrates in-depth and current understanding of relevant laws, policies and issues ✓ Builds trusting relationships with the community ✓ Develops opportunities to contribute to the community, encourage community service among staff – is active in the community (e.g., offers facilities for community groups, provides projects for work-release programs; schools; university courses) ✓ Helps community see the refuge as an asset

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<p>Partnering: Develops networks and builds alliances, collaborates, and finds common ground with a wide range of stakeholders. Utilizes contacts to build and strengthen support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Willing to listen, be open minded ✓ Ability to compromise ✓ Persuasive communicator ✓ Engages all stakeholders and seeks common ground, fosters consensus among stakeholders ✓ Leverages partnerships – identifies what each member can bring to the table, understands who the right people are to be at the table
<p>Political Savvy: Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the Service. Approaches each problem with a clear understanding of organizational and political reality, and recognizes the impact of alternative courses of action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Establishes connections with diverse organizational interests to generate external support for conservation goals. ✓ Identifies potential barriers to the accomplishment of the Agency’s strategic direction and implements proactive steps to mitigate obstacles. ✓ Creates mechanisms that provide stakeholders with constructive means to express concerns and addresses issues. ✓ Adapts strategies to preserve important partnering relationships. ✓ Informs and negotiates buy-in from all key stakeholders. ✓ Tailors messages that effectively communicate specific aspects of agency policy to targeted audiences.
<p>Vision: Takes a long-term view and acts as a catalyst for organizational change, creating a shared vision with others and working to translate that vision into action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participates in knowledge and policy networks and ensures Agency participation in such networks. ✓ Conceives and articulates goals which unite people in the pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts. ✓ Establishes key strategic planning processes that enable the Agency to remain responsive to changing needs. ✓ Provides a clear and explicit view that signals where the organization is headed and why. ✓ Is a visible anchor for others, reaffirming key values and importance of the mission in times of change. ✓ Is a personal source of energy and direction.

Technical Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

In addition to the leadership competencies described above, you will also need technical knowledge and skills across a range of topics relevant to the Refuge System.

Planning

- ✓ Knowledge of the applicable policies and procedures for the development of Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP), Habitat Management Plans (HMP), and/or land acquisition plans
- ✓ Ability to plan, develop, coordinate and manage the resolution of resource use issues and problems related to a wildlife refuge
- ✓ Knowledge of planning and budgeting processes to participate in development of long-range plans, annual work plans, and associated budgeting
- ✓ Knowledge of management and administrative goals and objectives sufficient to prepare functional resource plans and fiscal and annual work plans

Law and Policy

- ✓ Knowledge of natural resource laws, including but not limited to the Refuge Administration Act of 1966, National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Clean Water Act, and the Wilderness Act
- ✓ Knowledge of Service regulations, policies, goals, and management planning and implementation related to the Refuge System (e.g., compatibility, appropriate uses, accessibility, comprehensive conservation planning, law enforcement)
- ✓ Knowledge of state, local and Tribal laws, customs, and economic interests
- ✓ Understanding of congressional processes and procedures (e.g., authorization, appropriation, and budget processes), and how they affect Service operations
- ✓ The role of the Service budget and legislative affairs offices in policy development

Realty/Land Acquisition/Protection

- ✓ Understanding of Realty policies and regulations, including knowledge of land acquisition planning; and land protection plans and options
- ✓ Knowledge of laws, rules and regulations that affect land protection in the Refuge System (e.g., water rights, subsurface mineral leases, rights of way, etc.)

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Budget Development and Management

- ✓ Ability to formulate and execute a budget at a field, regional or national level
- ✓ Understanding of the Service's budgeting and procurement processes and procedures
- ✓ Knowledge of purchasing, contracting, property management and human resources management policies, procedures, rules, regulations and related business management IT systems
- ✓ Knowledge of the federal budget process and how it is linked to Refuge System activities
- ✓ Supervision/Human Resource Management
- ✓ Ability to implement and comply with the Equal Employment Opportunity Program.
- ✓ Knowledge of grievance and appeals processes
- ✓ Ability to foster individual development and innovation as well as group spirit and cooperation
- ✓ Ability to effectively communicate both within the work station and with outside interests

Cross-Program Knowledge

- ✓ Basic technical knowledge relevant to other Service programs
- ✓ Knowledge of current issues and events influencing other Service programs
- ✓ Knowledge of how external programs influence, and are influenced by, Refuge System issues and operations
- ✓ Knowledge of how the Service's conservation tools are implemented in different programs

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APPENDIX C: RECOMMENDED LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The following table outlines the courses and programs that help Refuge System employees develop as leaders. These opportunities are divided into four types: 1) Leadership Development Programs, 2) NCTC courses, 3) Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Eastern and Western Management Development Centers (EMDC and WMDC) and the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) courses, and 4) other External Opportunities.

Recommended career levels during which staff may benefit most from taking particular courses are indicated by an “X”.

Leadership Development Programs

Leadership Development Programs	13/14	15/SES
<p>Stepping Up to Leadership (SUTL) (LED6072)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program offers individuals the chance to improve their leadership skills through skill assessments, coaching, self-paced and group exercises, and developmental assignments. This program targets aspiring mid-level managers. The program includes a two-week session targeting leadership competencies and a follow-up week after a six-month interim. The interim requires a commitment to work on your Individual Development Plan through developmental assignments, coaching and team project work. • Open to GS-11 and GS-12 employees and Wage Grade Supervisors and Wage Grade Leaders • One 2-week session, a 1-week session, and two shadowing assignments • Available bi-annually on a competitive basis 		

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<p>USFWS Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP) (LED6078)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program includes three phases focusing on self, team, and the agency. Although NCTC will host the classroom sessions for the program, the primary learning environment is within the agency itself. Training assignments, including a 30-day job swap and a 60-day developmental assignment, will be used to explore and experience leadership in the day-to-day environment of the Service. • Open to GS-13 and GS-14 employees • One 2-week session, two 1-week sessions, and 30- and 60-day assignments between September and July. • Available annually on a competitive basis 	<p>X</p>	
<p>Leadership Development Programs</p>	<p>13/14</p>	<p>15/SES</p>
<p>Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SES CDP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program includes feedback-intensive and mentoring components, and will introduce candidates to the best leaders in the Federal Government • People who complete the program and obtain certification by an SES Qualifications Review Board (QRB) may be selected for an SES position anywhere in the Federal Government without further competition (applies to GS-15's only) • Open to GS-14 and GS-15 employees in the Service • CDP opportunities are posted on USAJOBS during the application period 	<p>Open to GS-14 in the FWS</p>	<p>X</p>

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NCTC Courses

NCTC Training Courses	13/14	15/SES
NCTC Supervisory/Management Training Courses		
<p>Applied Supervision (LED6102)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course covers certain critical personnel, human relations, leadership, and critical thinking skills needed to supervise employees in mission accomplishment while building a productive work environment; topics include transitioning from peer to supervisor, roles and responsibilities, developing and motivating staff, handling difficult situations, and leading a diverse workforce • This course is open to new supervisors or team leaders with supervisory responsibilities • Length: 4.5 days in classroom plus 5 hours for prerequisites for a total of 45 hours • Availability: Multiple offering per year 		
<p>Advanced Supervision: Building on Experience (LED6166)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course provides the experienced supervisor with best practices in managing people and an opportunity to share experiences and learn from others • This course is open to experienced supervisors who have already completed 80 hours of mandatory supervisory training. • Length: 4.5 days/40 hours • Availability: Biannually 		

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NCTC Supervisory/Management Training Courses		
<p>Introduction to Management Skills (LED6176)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course is a general introduction to management for those in primarily non-supervisory positions; topics include establishing rapport and cultivating influence, achieving trust and building relationships, planning and organizing projects and resources, building and leading a team, solving problems and making decisions, and implementing change successfully • Length: 3 days/24 hours • Availability: Biannually 		
<p>Coaching for Effective Performance (LED6179)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course presents a detailed methodology for coaching others and demonstrates the personal and interpersonal qualities needed to exemplify a coaching partnership. • Length: 2 days/16 hours • Availability: Biannually 	X	
<p>Ethics for New Supervisors (LED6W05)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This on-line program has been developed to help ensure that new supervisors know how to find answers to a variety of ethical dilemmas that arise about employee conduct and activities and ensure compliance with Federal regulations. • Length: 1 hour • Availability: Self-study Web-based 	X	
<p>Supervisory Pay and Leave Overview (LED6W06)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course provides supervisors with various resources to find the correct and legal answers to a number of pay and leave scenarios similar to those faced by supervisors in the Fish & Wildlife Service. • Length: 1 hour • Availability: Self-study Web-based 	X	

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NCTC Leadership Training Courses		
<p>Increasing Your Personal Effectiveness (LED5128)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course teaches participants techniques to help them deal with the challenges in today’s ever changing work environment; participants assess their strengths and identify ways to fine tune them. • Length: 4.5 days/36 hours • Availability: Multiple offerings 		
<p>Crucial Conversations Workshop (LED5153)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course teaches participants how to create conditions where people speak with complete candor (no matter the topic) and with complete respect (no matter the person). • Ideal for supervisors and leaders who have responsibilities to get work accomplished with others. Also, for any employee who wants to improve their two-way communication skills as they strive for excellence in the workplace. • Length: 3 days • Availability: Multiple offerings 		
<p>The Leadership Challenge Workshop (LED6109)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the three-day workshop, participants analyze their personal feedback report while learning the Leadership Challenge Model through video cases, group activities and discussion, lectures and workbook activities. Course participants choose up to ten observers to complete an online 360-degree assessment based on the Model and receive a detailed personal feedback report. • The target audience is supervisors, leaders, intact teams or work stations—essentially all employees. • Length: 4 days • Availability: Multiple offerings 		
<p>Project Leader Academy (LED6201)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course covers the common knowledge and skills needed for project leaders to be successful in any program area in the Service. • The target audience is New Project Leaders in their first 18 months from all program areas of the Service. Assistant Project Leaders and Deputy Project Leaders may also attend on a space available 		

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<p>basis. More experienced Project Leaders (18 months to approximately four years) may attend through Regional recommendation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length: 2 weeks • Availability: Biannually 		
<p>Advanced Refuge Management Academy (WLD4308)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This two-week academy focuses on the development of technical competencies that will help prepare senior refuge staff to manage strategically, enhance decision making, minimize risk, and maximize management outcomes. • The primary target audience is GS-12 & 13 employees in the refuge manager (0485) series with more than six years of experience. Employees in other disciplines will be considered for nomination, particularly if they have demonstrated the potential for moving into mid-level refuge management positions (not exclusively 0485 positions). • Length: 2 weeks/80 hours • Availability: Annually 	<p>X</p>	
<p>Additional NCTC Training</p>		
<p>Congressional Operations Seminar (LED5119)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course explores different aspects of Congress, congressional process and procedures, and how they affect daily FWS operations. • This course is conducted on Capitol Hill, where participants learn from congressional members, political scientists, lobbyists, the media, and FWS legislative affairs and budget office staff. • Length: 4.5 days/36 hours • Availability: Annually 	<p>X</p>	
<p>Conservation Partnerships (OUT8110)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course focuses on forming and managing partnerships between the Service and other entities, including government agencies, conservation groups, and landowners. Instruction emphasizes how partnerships can be used as a tool to help you meet your station’s natural resources goals. • Length: 3 days/21 hours 	<p>X</p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability: every other year 		
<p>Conservation Partnerships in Practice (OUT8118)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an advanced-level conservation partnerships course that builds on the partnership fundamentals learned in “Conservation Partnerships”(OUT 8110) • Length: 3.5 days/28 hours • Availability: Annually 	X	
<p>Public Participation and Informed Consent – Part I (OUT8127)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course will teach participants how to choose the appropriate strategies for turning opponents of your project into those who give their grudging or full consent to get it done • Length: 3 days/21 hours • Availability: Annually 	X	
<p>Public Participation and Informed Consent – Part II (OUT8128)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will become intimate with the nitty-gritty citizen participation (CP) tools necessary to engineer informed consent by learning how to make meetings, advisory committees, and the media work more effectively for themselves and their projects • Length: 3 days/21 hours • Availability: Annually 	X	
<p>Congress and the Field Office (OUT8191)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course gives participants ways to increase the effectiveness of contact with Congressional staff members so as to communicate their agency’s message in an accurate, concise, rational manner • Length: 2 days/15 hours • Availability: By request 	X	X
<p>Integrating NEPA into Agency Activities (ECS3121)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course provides instruction regarding the purpose and procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), how NEPA affects the decision-making process involving Federal planning and actions, how to structure and review NEPA documents, and how other laws and regulations relate to NEPA 	X	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length: 4 days/32 hours • Availability: Annually 		
<p>Natural Resource Law (WLD2122)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course provides an overview of the major federal conservation laws of interest to natural resource professionals • Length: 3 days/24 hours • Availability: Annually 	X	
<p>Interagency Fire Management Leadership Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course is mandatory for all Refuge managers/project leaders and Program and ARDs who are responsible for managing or providing oversight to a fire program on our lands • Length: 32 hours • Availability: Recurring 	X	X
<p>Law Enforcement for Managers Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Division of Law Enforcement and the Division of Refuges offer this overview of FWS law enforcement to management-level personnel. • Length: 3.5 days/28 hours • Availability: Annually 	X	

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Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Office of Personnel Management	13/14	15/SES
Federal Executive Institute (FEI)		
<p>Conflict Resolution Skills: Effective Approaches to Difficult People, Difficult Conversations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The methods presented in this seminar can help you to transform even the most difficult circumstances into satisfying, win-win experiences through strategic conversations that help you move beyond difficult or uncomfortable situations instead of getting stuck in them • Length: 1 week • http://www.leadership.opm.gov/programs/Specialized-Skills/CSR/Index.aspx 	X	X
<p>Executive Communication Skills: Leading the Process of Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This fast-paced program at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) moves between role-play exercises that build your interpersonal communication skills and leadership sessions providing tools for overcoming barriers to change in your organization. • Length: 5 days • http://www.leadership.opm.gov/programs/Executive-Leadership-Development/EXE0010/Index.aspx 		X
<p>Additional OPM/FEI Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether you are a new supervisor or a seasoned executive, you can always enhance your leadership and management skills. • OPM and the FEI offer several open enrollment programs that offer the opportunity to network with peers from all branches of the Government, participate in highly interactive, intensive training, and put your classroom experience to immediate use • http://www.leadership.opm.gov/Programs/ 	X	X

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External Courses

External Courses and Programs	13/14	15/SES
Academic Institutions		
<p>Senior Executive Fellows, Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Executive Fellows program provides practical tools that help participants identify and analyze the challenges and opportunities facing their organization; develop strategic plans of action using communication, negotiation and coalition-building; manage tensions between long-term policy goals and short-term political pressures; and create an environment that is responsive to change. • The program focuses on skills associated with the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) executive core qualifications (ECQs) and is designed for federal government employees at the GS-14/GS-15 levels and their military counterparts. • Availability: 3 times per year • http://ksgexecprogram.harvard.edu/Programs/sef/overview.aspx 	GS-14	GS-15
<p>Senior Managers in Government, Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This course focuses on the multi-dimensional issues faced by senior managers including policy development, political strategy, performance management, organizational design, and negotiation. • This course was designed for elected, appointed, and senior career officials in the Senior Executive Service and their counterparts. • Availability: Annually • http://ksgexecprogram.harvard.edu/Programs/smg/whoshouldattend.aspx 		SES
<p>Management Program for Leaders in Public Service, Pennsylvania State University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this program, you will examine critical management issues facing public service professionals today and develop managerial capabilities beyond tactical leadership. In addition, you'll develop fundamental executive core qualifications and leadership competencies identified by the Office of Personnel Management for Senior Executive Service. • This program is for middle-to senior-level managers in public service management • http://www.smeal.psu.edu/psep/topic/programs/mpps.html 	X	

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Academic Institutions		
<p>Graduate Certificate in Leadership Coaching, George Washington University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This certificate combines emerging theories of coaching with an introduction to the practice of organizational coaching • The certificate is designed for professionals who want to develop and improve their coaching skills and knowledge • This 4-course (12-credit-hour) program held at the Arlington Graduate Education Center can be completed in eight months • http://www.directoryofschools.com/The-George-Washington-University/Leadership-Coaching.htm 	X	
<p>National Leadership Institute, University of Maryland - University College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Leadership Institute offers a variety of programs and workshops that prepare high potential managers to enhance productivity and performance in an array of public and private organizations. • http://www.umuc.edu/nli/ 	X	
Additional External Opportunities		
<p>Executive Leadership in a Changing Environment, Brookings Institute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with stimulating thinkers and strategic development experts to build on your leadership qualities, and push yourself to develop fresh insights and approaches. • Designed for Senior Executive Service (SES) Members or SES Candidates • Length: 5 days • http://www.brookings.edu/execed/programs/exceleadership.aspx 		X
<p>Leadership Programs offered by Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CCL offers a variety of courses and programs that feature classroom instruction, simulations, personal assessment and one-on-one coaching. In CCL’s courses, you will assess your leadership abilities, practice new skills, and build an action plan to become a more effective leader. • http://www.ccl.org/leadership/programs/summaries.aspx?pageId=839 	X	X

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Additional External Opportunities		
<p>Strategies and Tactics for the Experienced Natural Resource Negotiator, Department of the Interior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This training course presents participants with more advanced principles, skills, and techniques used in natural resource negotiation. • Length: 3 days • http://doilearn.doi.gov/training/classscheduler/index.cfm?Fuseaction=Home.CourseDetails&intCSCourseID=1763&AddPopularity=1 	X	X
<p>The Wildlife Society’s Leadership Institute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants partake in a variety of distance learning and hands-on projects, which include reading and interpreting leadership materials, presenting to peer groups, working collaboratively with each other, leading discussions, and developing summary documents regarding professional leadership. • The Leadership Institute is geared toward young professionals who are only a few years into their careers and who are working full- or part-time in a professional position in wildlife management or conservation. • http://joomla.wildlife.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=147 	X	
<p>Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed for individuals only a few years into their careers, this initiative brings together new, emerging leaders in the wildlife conservation field for training in campaign development and related conservation skills, including helping to organize and run a 2-year wildlife-related campaign. • This initiative is supported by numerous conservation organizations, including US Fish & Wildlife Service • http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw_united_states/join_campaigns/national_regional_efforts/emerging_wildlife_conservation_leaders/index.php 	X	