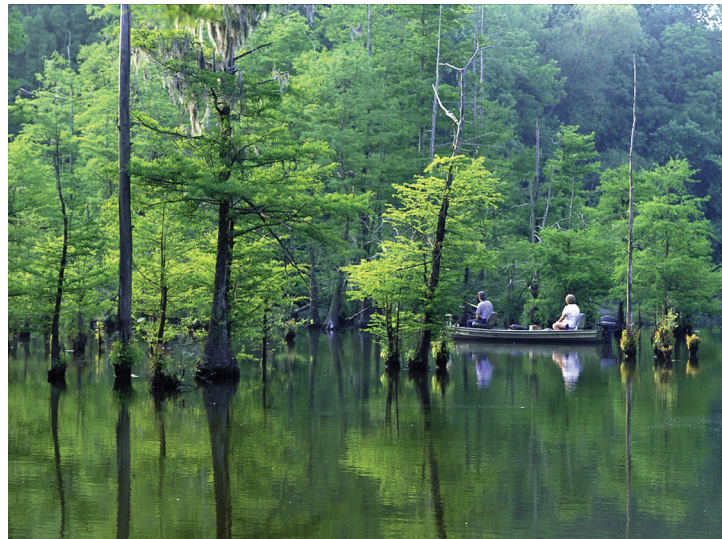


*Priority Actions for 2010-2011***Climate Change Strategic Plan**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed a Climate Change Strategic Plan that establishes a vision and direction for the agency's future response to accelerated climate change. But we are acting now to lay the foundation for this strategy.

Actions specified in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Plan build on the Service's commitment to implement partnership-driven, results-oriented landscape conservation to address the unprecedented challenges posed by accelerating climate change. The Service is focusing on the following priority areas:



Choctaw National Wildlife Refuge by J and K Hollingsworth

Building regional and field technical capacity for climate change adaptation

Working with our partners, the Service is creating and enhancing technical capacity to provide cutting-edge science and information that will help land and wildlife managers make decisions related to changing climate. This capacity is being housed in regionally based partnerships called Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs), which provide landscape-scale biological planning and conservation design expertise. A nationwide network of 21 LCCs is envisioned. Nine LCCs have already been established and the additional 12 LCCs will be established in the next few years.

Developing a National Fish and Wildlife Climate Adaptation Strategy

The Service is working with federal and state agencies, conservation organizations and other partners to address accelerating climate change more effectively by ensuring actions are coordinated across landscapes and political boundaries. Work has begun to support the development of a national fish and wildlife climate adaptation strategy that will provide a shared blueprint to guide wildlife adaptation partnerships over the coming decades.

Building climate change leadership and management capacities

During the next few years, policy and political decisions of enormous consequence will be made at national, regional, and state levels. The Service has begun to build capacity to help shape and respond to these decisions, while capitalizing on the talents of its employees, by establishing several key professional positions, a national climate team and regional climate teams.

Reviewing legal, regulatory and policy issues

The Service has begun a review of the legal, regulatory and policy frameworks within which we operate to identify necessary and recommended changes in these frameworks that will encourage and support effective responses to climate change.

Identifying, prioritizing, and adjusting Service activities to consider the effects of climate change

The Service has begun reviewing all aspects of its work in order to identify areas where anticipated climate change impacts can and should inform Service and state wildlife agency planning and implementation activities.



Developing expertise in and conducting climate change adaptation planning

New tools will be needed to develop successful climate change adaptation plans, including species and habitat vulnerability assessments, and planning and decision-support tools such as scenario planning and risk assessments. The Service is working with partners to develop these new tools.

Developing a national inventory and monitoring program

The National Wildlife Refuge System has initiated work on a national inventory and monitoring program that will provide data for a long-term understanding of the effects of changing climate on fish and wildlife and for assessing the success of conservation actions taken on the ground to help fish and wildlife adapt to climate change.

Identifying priority freshwater needs

The Service is working to identify and assess priority issues related to changes in freshwater quality and quantity, which includes anticipating impacts to fish and wildlife species and habitats and using the best available climate change modeling to inform management decisions.

Addressing habitat fragmentation

The Service is working to provide recommendations and assess progress toward promoting habitat connectivity to support species population objectives. As habitats alter and species' ranges shift as a result of climate change, habitat corridors will become even more crucial to species' migration and ultimate survival.

Facilitating international leadership on climate change and wildlife

The Service has begun to develop a strategy for engaging key countries in a partnership to share and acquire knowledge on climate change adaptation, mitigation and public engagement.

Expanding biological carbon sequestration to create habitat for wildlife

The Service is working with conservation partners to expand biological carbon sequestration techniques, restore habitat, and conserve wildlife. We will use landscape conservation planning approaches to determine where, when, how much and what habitat types should be conserved to achieve population, habitat and carbon sequestration objectives.

Assisting in shaping energy policy

Solutions to global warming are likely to focus on clean energy development. The Service has begun working through the Department of the Interior to exercise its responsibility as a stakeholder in America's energy future and help shape energy policy that considers wildlife conservation and renewable energy development issues.

Reducing the Service's carbon footprint

Across the agency, Service employees have begun documenting the Service's carbon footprint and instituting practices to avoid greenhouse gas emissions, minimize unavoidable emissions and offset remaining emissions.

Educating and communicating

Working closely with partners and stakeholders, the Service is working on a strategy to engage the American public regarding the significance of climate change for fish and wildlife. The Service will also pursue an aggressive internal and external communications effort designed to support its climate change and landscape conservation work with employees, partners and others.

For more information on how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve the nature of America in a changing climate, visit <http://www.fws.gov/home/climatechange>



Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge by Tupper Ansel Blake



Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge by Virginia Heitman