



Migratory Bird Program

Program Overview

Migratory birds are among nature’s most magnificent living resources and play a significant ecological, economic, and cultural role in the U.S. and internationally. The Service is directed by Congress to ensure the perpetuation of migratory bird populations and their habitats. The Migratory Bird Program seeks to conserve migratory bird populations and associated habitats for future generations, through careful monitoring and effective population management.

The program’s units – Division of Migratory Bird Management, Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, Regional Migratory Bird Programs and Office of Aviation Management – work together and with other partners to assess, manage and conserve over 800 native migratory bird species and their habitats.

The program develops and implements survey, monitoring, and assessment activities to determine status of both game and non-game birds. With this information, the Service provides opportunities,



USFWS

through the issuance of permits and regulations, for organizations and individuals to participate in migratory bird activities, such as hunting, scientific research, rehabilitation of injured birds, education, falconry, and taxidermy, as well as control of overabundant

species. Each year, the program compiles proposed and final regulations to authorize migratory bird hunting seasons. The Flyway System provides a solid foundation for a partnership-based approach to consulting with the states on establishment of these annual migratory bird hunting regulations.

The program conducts biological planning, project implementation, and evaluation within the framework of regional, national and international bird management plans/initiatives. In addition, it participates in international treaty negotiations related to migratory birds, and coordinates efforts to reduce bird mortalities resulting from collisions with equipment and structures, by-catch, pesticide, and other human-related causes. These activities and other proactive efforts are designed to maintain the health and sustainability of migratory bird species, thus reducing the likelihood of being added to the Endangered or Threatened Species lists..

Much of this work is carried out through joint venture (JV) partnerships. Joint ventures are regional-scale, self-directed partnerships of government agencies, corporations, and nongovernmental organizations that deliver habitat conservation in support of national and international bird conservation efforts. Joint ventures use a collaborative approach to develop regional bird conservation plans and facilitate cooperation among partners to fund and implement those plans. The consensus built around JV plans facilitates the integration of the programs and objectives of individual partners into a broader and more effective bird conservation effort. Joint venture success is based on science-based goals and strategies and a non-regulatory approach to bird conservation



delivery. Joint venture planning provides conservation partners with the necessary products for strategic, science based conservation action, i.e., population goals and quantitative habitat objectives at regional and local scales, management alternatives prioritized by their importance and likelihood of success, and evaluation measures to gauge results and improve performance.

The program administers two multi-million dollar grant programs, one under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) and another under the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA). It also administers the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) Program, an internationally recognized program that increases revenue available for migratory bird habitat conservation.

To ensure long-term support for bird conservation and continued opportunities for citizens to enjoy bird-related recreation, the program conducts outreach and education programs for children and adults, through programs such as International Migratory Bird Day, Junior Duck Stamp Program, and Urban Conservation Treaties for Migratory Birds.

Facts and Figures

- \$27.4 Million in Conservation and Monitoring
- \$1.5 Million in Permits

- \$10.9 Million in North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Joint Ventures)
- \$0.57 Million in Duck Stamp Office
- \$41.9 Million in NAWCA Grants
- \$4.4. Million in NMBCA Grants
- Migratory Bird staff in 9 Regions
- 217 FTEs

Laws the Program Administers

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.)
- Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act as amended (16 U.S.C. 2901-2911)
- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (16 U.S.C. 668-668d)
- North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989, as amended (16 U.S.C. 4401-4412)
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Improvement Act of 2000 as amended (16 U.S.C. 6101)
- Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act of 1934 as amended (16 U.S.C. 718-718j)
- Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program Act of 1994, (16 U.S.C. 719)

Emerging Issues

- Climate change impacts on bird species, migration
- Issues related to sea bird mortality
- National eagle permit program implementation
- Duck Stamp price increase
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Reauthorization
- Focal Species strategy – plan development and implementation

- Draft SEIS: Hunting of Migratory Birds
- Development of State of the Birds Report
- Strategic Habitat Conservation through Joint Ventures
- Increase conservation of habitats through Joint Ventures, NAWCA and NMBCA
- Collection of scientific data through Focal Species strategy, expanded monitoring activities, and work with USGS
- Citizens Call for Action through Urban Conservation Treaties, Junior Duck Stamp
- Avian mortality/incidental take issues



USFWS



USFWS



USFWS



USFWS

**Paul Schmidt, Assistant Director
Migratory Birds**
<http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/>

November 2008