



Mountain-Prairie Region

Region 6 External Affairs

2013 Accomplishments

Overview

The Mountain-Prairie Region External Affairs Office is responsive to the public, media, Congress, Tribes, partners, other stakeholders, Headquarters, DOI and the regional office and field stations in communicating and facilitating information about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's programs, issues and activities in the eight-state region. External Affairs strives to be a "one stop" shop for regional communication goals and objectives.

Our Goals

1. Anticipate and respond to emerging issues and policies
2. Develop strategic, proactive approaches and campaigns to increase acceptance of the Service mission and actions
3. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial communications partnerships with stakeholders (internal and external), critical to Service mission success
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of External Affairs activities



Pagosa skyrocket / USFWS

Public Affairs:

External Affairs identifies and communicates Service issues of public interest and concern. We provide outreach rollout and advice on issues, activities, and actions of regional significance. We assist with outreach strategy development, media relations, partnership building, success stories, campaigns, after action reviews, internal communications, field visit coordination, and special events planning.

Accomplishments for 2013:

- Co-led national team to develop new External Affairs Communications Plans (process, templates).
- Developed over 40 communications plans, disseminated over 90 news releases and produced over 100 top stories.
- Submitted articles to national Service publications including Fish and Wildlife News, Refuge Update, and Endangered Species Bulletin.
- Completed nearly ten Endangered Species Act Success Stories during the year (Dudley Bluffs bladderpod/twinpod, Salt Creek tiger beetle, Wyoming toad, pallid sturgeon, Neosho madtom, Platte River caddisfly, Coral Pink Sand Dunes Tiger Beetle, Utah Prairie Dog).
- Coordinated three media events including Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge flooding, black-footed ferret release, and Black-footed Ferret Recovery Center.
- Facilitated and responded to multiple media inquiries.
- Managed interns who volunteered over 100 hours of work through University of Denver's School of Public Administration.
- Developed and implemented 9 communications plans for National issues.
 - Surrogate Species
 - Sequestration
 - Fisheries Workforce Planning
 - National Wolf Delisting
 - Energy (wind energy)
 - Ivory Crush
 - Eagle Conservation Plan
 - Eagle Repository
 - Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program
- Developed and implemented 35 communications plans for high-profile, Regional issues
 - Black-backed Woodpecker
 - Bear River Conservation Area
 - Black-footed Ferret (SHB, CP)
 - Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery
 - Coral Pink Sand Dunes Tiger Beetle
 - Gierisch Mallow
 - Grizzly Bear Conservation Plan
 - Greater Sage-grouse
 - Gunnison Sage-grouse
 - Keystone Biological Opinion
 - Lesser Prairie Chicken
 - Lynx
 - Merricourt
 - Mexican Wolves
 - New Mexico Jumping Mouse
 - Niobrara Confluence and Ponca Bluffs
 - Ouray
 - Pagosa Skyrocket
 - Pallid Sturgeon
 - Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse
 - Prescribed Burn RMA
 - Quivira Water Rights
 - Quivira NWR CCP and EA
 - Rocky Mountain Arsenal CCP
 - Rocky Flats RMG
 - Salt Creek Tiger Beetle
 - Section 6 grants
 - Southwest Willow Flycatcher
 - Topeka Shiner
 - Utah Prairie Dogs
 - Wolf Livestock Demo Project
 - Wolverines
 - Yellow-billed Cuckoo
 - Fire Season Communications Plan (interagency)



United States Capitol / Architect of the Capitol

Congressional Affairs:

External Affairs serves as the liaison between the Service, Congress and other political entities in the region. We monitor legislative and policy issues at local, state and Congressional levels; maintain communication with state and Congressional levels and with state and district Congressional offices in the region; coordinate Congressional outreach activities with field stations; provide policy analysis and recommendations to the Regional Directorate; and serve as the regional point-of-contact for the Service's Headquarters of Congressional and Legislative Affairs.

Accomplishments for 2013:

- Conducted briefings on high priority issues including wolverine, black-footed ferret, Utah prairie dog, wolves, Niobrara Ponca Bluffs, etc.
- Led Congressional outreach on a number of listing decisions, including Gunnison sage-grouse, wolverine, lynx, yellow-billed cuckoo, and lesser prairie-chicken.
- Managed Congressional operations for controversial/high-profile issues such as: San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex expansion, Bear River Conservation Agreement, Gunnison sage-grouse, wolverine, greater sage-grouse, and those issues pertaining to communications rollouts.
- Developed proposal for streamlining and enhancing regional Congressional operations.
- Answered multiple Congressional inquiries regarding Gibson Hydro project, grizzly mortalities, mineral rights, Flower Creek Dam relicensing effort, and more.

Tribal Affairs:

External Affairs serves as a liaison to the 39 federally-recognized Tribes in the region. We monitor Tribal natural resources and conservation issues and maintain communication with the Tribes within the region. External Affairs also provides outreach and education regarding tribal efforts to protect, preserve and conserve fish and wildlife resources.

Accomplishments for 2013:

- Assisted in coordinating 12 internal and external workshops for Surrogate Species to over 360 employees and partners.
- Started development of Regional Tribal Strategic Plan.
- Conducted and coordinated Regional Tribal Roundtable with 13 tribes participating and 25 tribal members in attendance.
- Coordinated, tracked and reviewed 16 high profile Tribal or ecological issues that require consultation
- Provided technical assistance to Tribes during the Tribal Wildlife Grant (TWG) Request for Proposals (RFP) process and accepted, for review and scoring, 13 new TWG proposals.
- Developed Tribal funding proposal (for \$120K).
- Released two issues for Tracks for Tribes newsletter to over 150 tribal contacts.
- Coordinated national effort for National Eagle Repository Tribal consultations.



Black-footed ferret / USFWS

Digital Communications:

External Affairs provides digital communications for the Region as it pertains to web design, content development and maintenance; social media (Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, Tumblr, blogs, etc.); graphic design for publications and informational materials; video production; and partnership campaign development.

Web:

- Converted all press releases on or after May 23, 2013 to responsive-design optimized (for mobile, tablets, etc.).
- Developed and tracked all new webpages with Google Analytics.
- Developed PHP template system for streamlined, universal content changes on the new Region 6 website.
- Designed, created, coded, and tested 160 new webpages, style sheets, and PHP scripts.

fws.gov/mountain-prairie statistical Information from 10/1/12 – 10/1/13:

Note: Google Analytics information was only available beginning November 1, 2012.

Total Site Visits: 396,476

Unique Visitors: 252,972

Note: Visitors with a unique IP address

Total Page Views: 952,990



Social Media:

- Grew Regional social media networks by 27 accounts.
- Added 8,551 new Twitter followers and 12,700 new Facebook followers.
- Interacted with 198,600 unique individuals 288,300 times, resulting in 18.8 million media impressions (9.1 million went viral).
- Established new social media analytics.



Spring edition of the regional newsletter

Graphics:

- Developed and designed quarterly interactive regional newsletter with the programs and produced spring and summer issues.
- Produced over 20 factsheets for outreach.
- Developed and designed several graphic documents including Service Strategic Direction, Communications Plan Decision Tree, Regional Accomplishments 2013, Regional Priorities 2014 and the Year in Review annual report.
- Supported national campaigns (Crisis in the Prairies and Get Your Goose On!) with design of websites, posters, brochures, etc.



Ivory figurines that were destroyed at the Ivory Crush event / USFWS



Kayakers support the "Get your goose on!" campaign at Siletz Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon / USFWS

Partnerships/Campaigns:

External Affairs works with federal, state, NGOs and other partners to work on and deliver national and regional campaigns.

- Led coordination for the National Social Media Workshop.
- Provided ORIC support (produced poster, brochures).
- Entered into partnership with Rocky Mountain Area Coordination Center.
- Co-led Prairies Partnership Campaign (strategy, messaging, filming, funding opportunities, etc.).
- Rolled out "Get Your Goose On" campaign (videos, website, posters) with partners.
- Produced Hispanic Outreach Campaign with partners (brochure, posters, etc.).
- Rolled out black-footed ferret social media campaign with partners.
- Coordinated Ivory Crush Event with Headquarters and International Affairs.
- Assumed communication efforts for Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program with multiple partners.

Administrative:

External Affairs provides administrative support to the region on programs and activities such as the Headquarters Weekly Report and daily news clipping service.

- Distribute weekly report of high priority issues to Headquarters from all regional programs.
- Send out daily news clips via Cision with relevant Service articles and information.

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