



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Fish & Wildlife Management Assistance

## *Outreach and Other Duties*

Through the Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service carries out Congressionally mandated responsibilities, such as monitoring airborne hunting and applying for surplus grain to feed wildlife in times of disasters. However, one of our most important functions -- outreach -- is not legislatively mandated.

### **Outreach**

Outreach is simply communication and is an intrinsic part of everything we do. Outreach ranges from developing curricula for classrooms to providing presentations at international conferences to answering telephone inquiries from citizens.

Outreach is an integral part of an effective resource management program, through which strong partnerships are developed and program support is garnered. The Fish and Wildlife Assistance program, through its 64 field offices located across the Nation, has developed and implemented a variety of outreach activities. The majority of outreach is provided by fisheries biologists, but a few field offices have hired outreach specialists.

Through our outreach activities, millions of people are more aware of fish and wildlife resources and the activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Children and adults have become excited about conserving aquatic resources. Our circle of partners has expanded and support for our aquatic resource program has increased. At the same time, we are healing ecosystems, increasing fish and wildlife populations, and increasing recreational opportunities for boaters, anglers, wildlife watchers and hunters.

### **Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance program outreach includes:**

- *Interacting with private landowners on wetland and stream restoration projects*
- *Providing workshops on endangered species, invasive species, and aquatic habitat restoration*
- *Providing hundreds of presentations to schools, civic groups, and conservation organizations*
- *Developing and distributing thousands of brochures and newsletters*
- *Actively working with the news media, providing news stories and interviews*
- *Maintaining numerous web sites on issues such as invasive species and migratory fish returns*
- *Working closely with anglers to educate them about the hazards of lead sinkers*
- *Participating in hundreds of National Fishing Week activities*
- *Supporting the Adopt-a-Salmon family watershed education program, giving students an appreciation for the intricacies of anadromous fish restoration and watershed stewardship*
- *Briefings for Congress about important aquatic resource issues*



*Fish & Wildlife Management Assistance biologists bring children to the outside classroom to learn about habitats and the species that depend on them.*

### **Airborne Hunting**

In 1971, Congress passed the *Airborne Hunting Act* to counter the impacts wildlife on human interests. This Act allows airborne hunting of wildlife under State permit to protect land, water, livestock, domestic animals, human life, and crops.

Humans and wildlife don't always live in a state of peaceful coexistence. Wildlife often adopt behaviors not necessarily natural to them in response to human encroachment on their habitat. For instance, coyotes and other predators interact negatively with ranchers when they kill sheep and cattle.

The Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance program compiles an annual report from airborne hunting information submitted by the states. These reports document that airborne hunting is mainly used in the western United States, with coyotes being the main target to protect livestock.

### **Surplus Grain**

In 1961, Congress passed the *Surplus Grain for Wildlife Act* to provide supplemental foods for resident wildlife and migratory birds.

Heavy snows, wildfires, extended droughts, or other natural disasters devastate wildlife. When faced with starvation following disasters, wildlife often look for alternative food sources such as field or orchard crops.

The Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance program receives petitions from States whose resident wildlife face starvation. We contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which provides grain to the State for dispersal.

The program has provided hundreds of tons of surplus grain and is credited with preventing the starvation of thousands of animals such as mule deer, whitetail deer, elk, ducks, geese, turkey and pheasants. Farmers benefit from reduced crop damage.

*Interpretive signs provide people with information on restoration efforts and how they can help in conserving our fish, wildlife and habitat resources.*



*National Fishing Week provides millions of children knowledge about habitats, ethics and techniques for a first rate fishing experience.*



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