



# Fish and Wildlife Service

The mission of the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is to conserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Federal role in fish and wildlife management was first recognized in 1871 with the establishment of the Bureau of Fisheries. In the 1970s, the Bureau of Sport Fish and Wildlife became today's Fish and Wildlife Service. The changes in management and organization over the years demonstrate the evolving, yet continuing need for Federal programs to protect fish and wildlife resources.

Today, the Fish and Wildlife Service manages 508 national wildlife refuges and 50 coordination areas with waterfowl production areas in 186 counties, for a land

*"Nature is full of genius, full of divinity; so that not a snowflake escapes its fashioning hand."*

Henry David Thoreau  
Journal, Jan 5, 1856

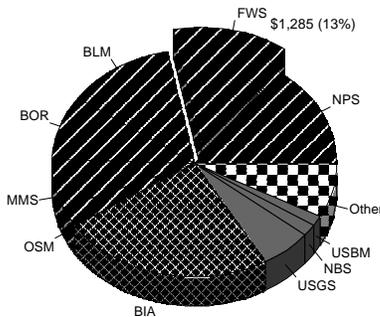
## ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The Endangered Species program received increased attention in 1995 as debate about reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 continued to make headlines across the country. The Act, recognized as the single most comprehensive environmental legislation ever enacted by Congress, requires the conservation of threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend.

In 1995, several innovative and important policies were drafted to help make the Act work better, especially in the area of encouraging the private sector to help recover threatened and endangered species. The "No Surprises" policy assures non-Federal landowners participating in functioning Habitat Conservation Planning efforts that no additional land restrictions or financial compensation will be required for species should unforeseen or extraordinary circumstances occur. The "Safe Harbor" policy authorizes non-intentional taking of Federally listed species that establish themselves on a property as a result of the landowner's affirmative conservation efforts. The "Residential Property/Low-Impact Exemption" policy will allow small (five acres or less) landowners to undertake certain activities that could result in taking of some threatened species. These policies are strong incentives for the private sector to work with FWS in recovery of listed species.

Figure 11

1995 Fish & Wildlife Service Budget Authority  
(\$ in millions)



Total DOI Budget Authority - \$9,744 million

mass totaling more than 92 million acres. FWS also manages 74 fish hatcheries and 52 Fishery Resources Offices throughout the country. Additionally, FWS is responsible for migratory bird management, endangered species protection, law enforcement and for consultations on water resource development projects.



*Fish and Wildlife biologist Joe Fontaine with Gray Wolf pup from first litter born to Yellowstone wolves. Photo credit - George Gentry.*

In March 1995, Congress mandated a moratorium on adding new species to the list for the remainder of the fiscal year. Consequently, only 47 non-foreign species of plants and animals were added to the list during 1995. This brought the total number of domestic listed species to 956 -- 526 species of plants and 430 species of animals.

In 1995, the bald eagle, our Nation's symbol, was reclassified from an endangered to a threatened species. The bald eagle has been an excellent example of cooperation among Federal and State agencies, private conservation groups, and private individuals, all working together to recover what once was a species on the brink of extinction in the lower 48 States.

## **NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM**

FWS manages the National Wildlife Refuge System, the Nation's only system of lands designated for conservation and management of fish and wildlife. The National Wildlife Refuge System is the most visible program of the Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1995, there were approximately 28 million visitors to wildlife refuges.

The Refuge System provides far more interaction with the general public than other components of FWS. The scale and range of this interaction cannot be captured solely by the number of visitors because it includes such diverse

### **REINTRODUCTION OF GRAY WOLF**



The gray wolf, a species that has become the ultimate symbol of wilderness, has returned to its niche in the natural heritage of the American West. Eight Canadian gray wolves were released in January of 1995 in Yellowstone National Park and four were released in central Idaho. They were the first to be reintroduced into the northern Rocky Mountain region in an ongoing effort to

restore the species, which was exterminated from the area 60 years ago.

All 12 wolves were captured in west-central Alberta with the cooperation and assistance of the Alberta Department of Forestry, Lands, and Wildlife's Fish and Wildlife Division. The Service will continue locating wolves in the region until about 30 are captured -- 15 for Yellowstone and 15 for central Idaho.

This was the first year of a 3 to 5 year effort to relocate wild gray wolves to the northern Rocky Mountains. FWS's goal is to recover the gray wolf by establishing 10 breeding pairs in each of the locations by the year 2002, at which point the protection of the Endangered Species Act would no longer be necessary.

activities as educational outreach, television specials, various forms of wildlife-dependent recreation and newspaper and magazine articles. For example, in November of 1994, Refuge staff worked with Turner Educational Service and volunteers to produce an interactive learning program at the Okefenokee Refuge in Georgia. The program was broadcast live for a total of 9 hours over a 3-day period and reached 260,000 students at 480 elementary and high schools nationwide. In addition, hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, nature tours and other recreational programs are in growing demand by the public.

Of the 956 species listed under the Endangered Species Act, 215 or 24 percent occur and/or have habitat on national wildlife refuges, and critical habitat for listed species occurs on 51 refuges.

The number of Refuge systems and acreage are indicators of the contribution of refuges to preserving natural diversity on refuge lands. As of September 30, 1995, the Refuge System included 89,72,022 acres in 508 National Wildlife Refuges, 317,322 acres in 50 Coordination Areas, and 2,280,950 acres in 186 counties with Waterfowl Production Areas.

### ***VOLUNTEERS***

Since the beginning of the Fish and Wildlife Service's volunteer program in 1982, individual volunteers may have come and gone, but the benefits of their labor have withstood the test of time. Although most volunteers work on refuges, they have been integrated into all Service programs. They have given their time during every season of the year and have represented every age from 5 years old to senior citizens. During 1995, approximately 21,000 volunteers donated 880,000 hours of time worth an estimated \$8.1 million.



*Felsentahl NWR volunteers conducted a tour of the refuge Visitor Center for this group of senior citizens from the local Leisure Lodge in concert with Earth Day celebration. Photo credit - R.J. Bridges.*

### ***ENFORCING WILDLIFE LAWS***

The Fish and Wildlife Service protects fish, wildlife and plants through a broad range of law enforcement techniques. Over the past 20 years, FWS's law enforcement responsibilities have shifted from primarily domestic in nature to increasingly international in scope. With the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1975, FWS truly became an international law enforcement agency. As barriers to world trade decrease, and the world's wildlife resources diminish, this international role becomes even more significant.

### ***DUCK STAMPS***

The Federal Duck Stamp Program, through the active support of conservation, art, philatelic and business interests, has become one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated. The Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act requires every waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older to possess a

valid Federal Duck Stamp. The 1934 price of the original \$1 Federal Duck Stamp has increased over the years to the present \$15 stamp, with 98 percent of every Duck Stamp dollar going directly to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund for wetlands acquisition, while the other 2 percent pays for the printing and distribution of the stamps.

The Federal Duck Stamp contest is held annually to choose a winning design for the following year and is the only annual art competition sponsored by the Federal Government.

### **FISHERIES**

The stewardship of fishery resources has been a core responsibility of the Fish and Wildlife Service for over 120 years. Recreational angling in the United States provides over \$69 billion in economic output, 1 million jobs, \$2.1 billion in Federal income taxes, \$1.1 billion in State sales taxes, \$227 million in State income taxes and about \$200 million in excise taxes to create new fishing opportunities.

The Fisheries Program was actively involved in several multi-agency programs to restore anadromous fish stocks along the Pacific, Gulf, and Atlantic coasts. These efforts



Fishing for largemouth bass. Photo credit - Fish and Wildlife Service.

### **AMERICA'S 500TH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE CELEBRATED NATIONWIDE**

It started small, nearly 100 years ago, when tiny 3.5 acre Pelican Island in Florida became the very first national wildlife refuge. Today, the National Wildlife Refuge System spans 92 million acres nationwide and on October 22, 1994, marked an historic occasion with the dedication of the 500th refuge at Canaan Valley in West Virginia. Other National Wildlife Refuges across the country held special events and ceremonies to commemorate this conservation milestone.

"The 500th national wildlife refuge is a statement by the American people that we care about conservation, we care about wildlife, and that we'll protect it for future generations," said Mollie Beattie, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. "I hope Americans everywhere will discover these little-known natural treasures they own."

The National Wildlife Refuge System extends from U.S. territories in the South Pacific, up to Alaska, across the United States, and into the Caribbean. Ranging in size from ½ acre to more than 19 million acres, refuges can be found within a short drive of virtually every major metropolitan area.

included improvements to fish passage facilities, implementation of fishery management plans, and production of 68 million Pacific salmon and steelhead trout, 5.5 million Atlantic salmon, and 7.7 million Atlantic and Gulf-striped bass. Non-anadromous fish restoration efforts focused on providing technical assistance in the recovery efforts of threatened and endangered species, restoration and enhancement of interjurisdictional waters, meeting trust responsibilities on tribal lands, mitigation of the impacts of Federal water development projects, and the prevention and control of aquatic nuisance species. These efforts were supported by the production of 98 million warm and coolwater species, 17 million inland salmonids, 6 million lake trout for the Great Lakes restoration effort, and production of 1.5 million threatened and endangered fish species.

In 1995, President Clinton emphasized the Administration's commitment to recreational fisheries by

signing Executive Order 12962 on Recreational Fisheries. The Order established a National Fisheries Coordination Council comprising seven Federal agencies and requires Federal agencies to strengthen efforts to improve the quality of streams, rivers, and lakes supporting recreational fisheries. The Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service co-chair the Council.

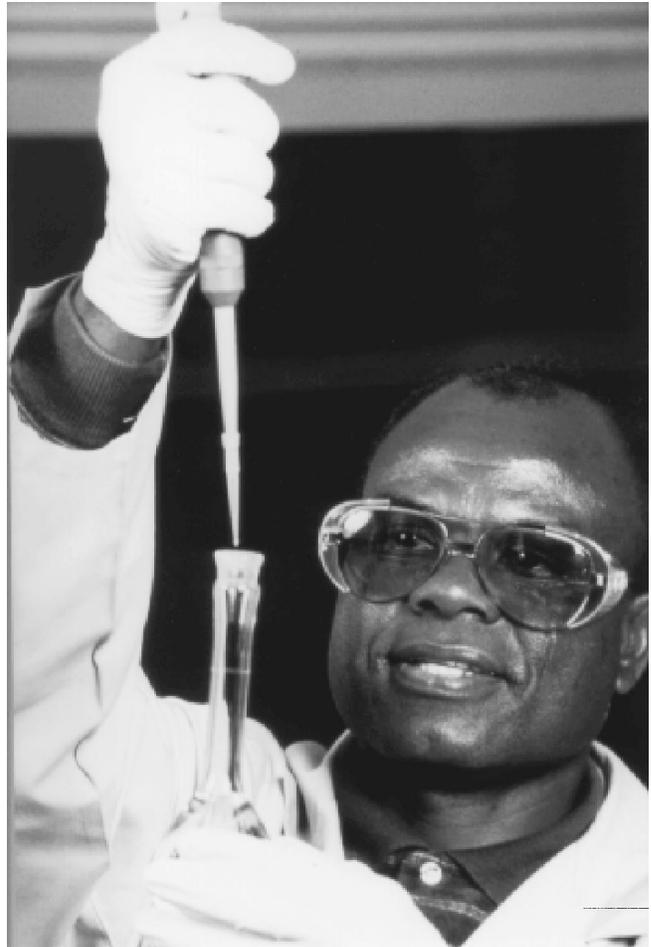
In 1995, FWS actively supported National Fishing Week, an annual activity designed for outreach purposes. Over 60,000 children and adults attended fishing clinics, demonstrations, and environmental education sessions at FWS facilities.

### ***CUSTOMER SERVICE***

In her message to FWS employees on the eve of Customer Service Day 1994, Director Mollie Beattie challenged employees to find new and innovative ways of responding to the needs of FWS customers. To meet the Director's challenge, the Fish and Wildlife Service initiated several projects to assess customer needs and ways to improve service.

FWS customer service highlights include the following:

- Published customer service standards at selected National Wildlife Refuge visitor centers in each of the seven FWS regions.
- Teamed with the National Park Service to develop a customer service evaluation card. The Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho is performing the research and development under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service. The evaluation card is designed for use at refuges and parks across the country, and will provide



*Fish and Wildlife Service Physical Science Technician Steve Boateng at work at the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge. Photo credit - Keith Weller.*

visitor feedback regarding specific aspects of customer service linked to published standards.

- Conducted pilot testing of the card at two National Wildlife Refuges. At both locations, over 95 percent of customers indicated an overall satisfaction of very good or good (scale - very good, good, average, poor, very poor). Satisfaction with other specific areas such as trail signs, cleanliness of facilities and quality of informational materials generally ranged from 80 percent to nearly 100 percent.