

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Part 142: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Chapter 12: Assistant Director - External Affairs

Originating Office: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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12.1 **Assistant Director - External Affairs** advises the Director and other U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) leaders on communications issues, including engagement with Congress, partners, and the media. External Affairs is the strategic communications program of the Service and is responsible for coordinating internal and external communications policies, strategic planning, and implementation. The Assistant Director supervises the following divisions:

A. The Division of Congressional and Legislative Affairs.

- (1) Serves as the principal liaison between Congress and the Service, including congressional committees and Members' personal offices, and coordinates congressional communications with the Department's congressional affairs office.
- (2) Provides information, materials, and assistance, including technical assistance on legislation, to Members of Congress. Coordinates testimony before congressional committees; meetings with and briefings for congressional offices; responses to Questions for the Record from congressional committees; responses to letters from congressional Members; responses to congressional inquiries; and proactive outreach to congressional offices.
- (3) Tracks legislation affecting the Service and provides reports to the Service and the Department on legislation.
- (4) Reviews and coordinates responses to legislative referrals from the Department of the Interior.
- (5) Develops and appropriately implements legislative priorities and congressional communications priorities with Service leadership.
- (6) Provides guidance to Service employees on congressional and legislative issues.

B. The Division of Public Affairs.

(1) Serves as the Service's primary spokesperson, ensuring that the Service provides accurate information to the public in a timely way and in formats that the public can easily access, understand, and use.

(2) Plans and coordinates public outreach campaigns internally across programs and regions, as well as externally with other Department of the Interior Bureaus, Federal and State agencies, industry and not-for-profit organizations, and private citizens, in order to communicate Service activities to target audiences.

(3) Serves as the central contact for the Office of Communication and provides guidance to the Department on media and public communication issues.

(4) Supervises the production of a wide range of media-oriented material, for a variety of internal and external uses, including print, radio, television, and web publications, speeches, fact sheets, and newsletters.

C. The Division of Partner and Intergovernmental Affairs.

(1) Serves as the liaison office between the Service and external partners, including the States, non-governmental organizations, and other entities.

(2) Provides guidance, coordination, and support to Service programs, regions, and field offices on partnership development.

(3) Serves as a central point of contact for Service staff needing information on partnership relations and environmental justice issues, including acting as a clearinghouse for partnership opportunities, and supporting the Service's Directorate to identify and form new partnerships.

(4) Provides strategic coordination and support for the Service's partnership activities, ensuring that the agency is properly represented in communications with key partners.

D. The Division of Marketing Communications.

(1) Serves as the primary office within the Service responsible for building, managing, and extending the Service's brand in support of the agency's overall mission. Provides guidance, coordination, and support to Service programs, regions, and field offices to maintain consistency for the Service's brand.

(2) Provides technological and policy leadership to Service programs and the regions in the areas of printing and publishing; web, multimedia, and social media; and internal communications delivery.

(3) Designs, manages, and updates the Service's national web page, provides broadcast quality video and photography to national and regional media outlets, maintains the National Image Library, and provides guidance on multimedia and social media efforts throughout the Service. Provides leadership to the National Web Council and National Social Media Council and serves as the primary liaison with the Department on web-based communications.

(4) Ensures compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies related to web-based communications tools, such as blogging, social marketing web sites, Twitter, podcasting, Instagram, Sprout Social, and other emerging technologies, as well as traditional printing and publishing products.

(5) Manages the customer call center, which responds to thousands of toll-free telephone calls and emails from the public each year.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Assistant Director – External Affairs

