

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

Effective Date: 5/16/2022

Series: Organization

Part 142: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Chapter 3: Chief - National Wildlife Refuge System

Originating Office: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

142 DM 3

3.1 Chief - National Wildlife Refuge System advises the Director and is responsible for staff support for operation of the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System), including the acquisition and disposition of lands, policy development, and public use activities at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) installations. The Chief supervises the following divisions:

A. Division of Natural Resources and Conservation Planning.

(1) Oversees national level funding, training, and guidance for the wildlife and habitat program of the Refuge System. This includes such areas and issues as designated wilderness areas, invasive species and pest management, contaminants biological support, marine resources, oil and gas, energy corridors, and wildlife trust resources.

(2) Supports air quality monitoring, reviews projects that affect air quality for refuges, and develops regulations and training requirements on air quality.

(3) Oversees fire preparedness; suppression and emergency fire rehabilitation; development of policy, procedures, and standards for fire-related activities; and coordination of the Service's interagency fire involvement.

(4) Provides guidance and technical assistance for developing and implementing national policy for the Refuge System by maintaining policy chapters in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Manual and regulations and legislation as needed; refuge-specific hunting and fishing regulations; Director's Orders, handbooks, and national training courses relating to the Refuge System; and responding to Freedom of Information Act requests directed to the headquarters office of the Refuge System.

(5) Oversees the national refuge planning program. The program includes comprehensive conservation planning, strategic growth of the Refuge System, landscape-level planning, land conservation through acquisition and other authorities, and step-down planning.

(6) Manages the national Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Planning course. Develops planning-related products (brochures, displays, handbooks, etc.), coordinates among the regional planning offices, manages the national planning budget, and provides technical assistance.

(7) Manages the Natural Resource Program Center in Fort Collins, Colorado. This Center includes the national refuge inventory and monitoring program, water rights management and use, data management, mapping of resources on all Refuge System lands (through the Geographic Information System (GIS)), monitoring sea-level rise, analyzing the human dimensions of conservation, and assessing and addressing climate change issues.

(8) Manages the Partners for Fish and Wildlife and Farm Conservation Programs, which offer technical and financial assistance to private landowners for voluntary habitat restoration.

(9) Manages the Coastal Program, which offers technical and financial assistance for conservation planning of coastal and estuary ecosystems.

(10) Manages the Marine Program, which offers technical assistance for conservation planning of marine ecosystems.

(11) Co-leads planning and support of tri-lateral meetings and committees (i.e., meetings involving the United States, Mexico, and Canada).

B. Division of Realty.

(1) Acquires lands and waters or interests in lands and waters for the Refuge System and the National Fish Hatchery System, primarily with money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

(2) Develops national policies; oversees management of realty issues; and prepares reports on the acquisition, use, and disposition of the Service's land interests.

(3) Performs official U.S. cadastral surveys and mapping, processes land and mineral applications, and performs other actions associated with land acquisition.

(4) Provides staff support to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission.

(5) Coordinates the Refuge System geospatial program.

C. Division of Visitor Services and Communication.

(1) Leads national programs to ensure the highest quality visitor experiences on units of the Refuge System.

- (2) Develops policies, regulations, and other guidance that support refuge visitor services, wildlife-dependent recreation, communications, and cultural resources programs.
- (3) Fosters Refuge Friends organizations and Service volunteers nationwide.
- (4) Leads efforts to engage local communities in wildlife conservation, including the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program.
- (5) Leads youth employment and learning programs throughout the Refuge System.
- (6) Leads the cultural and paleontological resources program for the Service.
- (7) Promotes the Service identity through uniforms, signs, publications, and digital communications.
- (8) Leads a strategic, coordinated, and integrated communications program that builds long-term relationships and support for the Refuge System.

D. Division of Refuge Law Enforcement. The Division coordinates, advises, recommends, and reports on the resource protection, public safety, and law enforcement services for the Refuge System.

- (1) Plans and develops national policy and guidance related to Refuge System law enforcement.
- (2) Administers the Service's significant incident program in accordance with Departmental policy.
- (3) Coordinates and manages Refuge Law Enforcement elements of emergency support function response under the National Response Framework.
- (4) Administers and manages the Service Honor Guard for the Director.
- (5) Administers and manages the Service's Refuge Law Enforcement K-9 Program.
- (6) Develops and delivers basic, advanced, and supervisory law enforcement training to Refuge personnel.
- (7) Develops operational procedures; provides legislative and regulatory support; and develops, delivers, and evaluates training programs and exercises.
- (8) Works with national and international organizations and other Government agencies on law enforcement issues.
- (9) Responds to external inquiries on law enforcement issues involving the

Refuge System.

E. Infrastructure Management Division. The division manages deferred maintenance 5-year planning for the Refuge System and the engineering, constructed real property, Federal lands transportation program, off-road utility vehicle safety training, and heavy equipment programs for the entire Service. Additional division responsibilities include the following:

- (1) Manages the Service Asset and Maintenance Management System, which is the corporate data system for managing constructed real property assets throughout the Service.
- (2) Manages the use, reporting, and accountability of quarters.
- (3) Manages the Refuge System portfolio of constructed real property, which includes budgeting, performance management, and overall monitoring and reporting.
- (4) Manages the heavy equipment budgeting, purchasing, policy, and safety training program for the Service.
- (5) Manages the off-road utility vehicle safety training program for the Service.
- (6) Serves as the lead for Refuge System accountability and management improvement activities under the Chief Financial Officers Act.
- (7) Directs the Service's engineering, construction, dam safety, bridge safety, seismic safety, energy management, sustainability, and environmental management and compliance activities.
- (8) Directs the Service's Federal Lands Transportation Program, including budgeting, performance management, and overall monitoring and reporting.
- (9) Develops policies, standards, criteria, and procedures that help accomplish Service program objectives through facility development, rehabilitation, maintenance, inspection, and audits.
- (10) Leads the Service's Construction Investment Review Board. The Board manages the construction investment process, ensuring that the Service meets mission goals and minimizes risks.

F. Division of Budget, Performance, and Workforce.

- (1) Formulates and executes the budget for the Refuge System by producing and defending budget requests and allocating funds to the refuges.
- (2) Tracks and analyzes expenditures.

(3) Develops strategic plans and performance measures for the Refugee System.

(4) Develops workforce plans by analyzing workforce trends and requirements.

(5) Assists managers to better understand the role of the budget and appropriations on their refuges.

(6) Provides national guidance, support, and budgetary information to the program, its stakeholders, and others.

G. The Office of Emergency Management and Physical Security.

(1) Provides expertise and leadership for the Service's emergency management and physical security responsibilities Service-wide through the integration of emergency management programs, functions, and supporting activities to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all hazards (natural and human caused incidents/disasters). This is in accordance with Departmental policy and implementation of Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness, Homeland Security; Presidential Directive 5: Management of Domestic Incidents; and implementation of the National Incident Management System.

(2) Administers national level funding, training, policies, procedures, standards, and criteria that help the Service plan for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate for all hazards (natural and human caused incidents/disasters).

(3) Administers both a Service-wide emergency management and physical security program. Provides an Emergency Coordinator to serve as principal advisor to the Director in matters related to planning, coordination, resource requirements, execution, and evaluation of emergency management and physical security activities. The Emergency Coordinator also represents the Service on the Department's Emergency Management Council and Physical Security community.

(4) Supports the Departmental Continuity of Operations program through readiness activities so that the Service's support will meet essential defense and civilian needs during any national security emergency and activities related to Homeland Security Presidential Directive 20, National Continuity Policy.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System

