

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

Effective Date: 5/16/2022

Series: Organization

Part 142: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Chapter 4: Assistant Director - Fish and Aquatic Conservation

Originating Office: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

142 DM 4

4.1 **Assistant Director - Fish and Aquatic Conservation** advises the Director and is responsible for national fish and aquatic conservation issues, policy, and activities. Activities involve anadromous, coastal/estuarine, Great Lakes, and inland fishery resources; fish and aquatic conservation on Tribal, military, and other Federal and State lands; aquatic invasive species; and conservation education. The Assistant Director maintains liaisons with national and international organizations in the fish and aquatic conservation community. The Assistant Director supervises the following divisions:

A. The Division of Fish and Aquatic Conservation Programs coordinates and analyzes activities associated with fishery management, aquatic habitat restoration and recovery, fish and wildlife resource management, aquatic invasive species, and injurious wildlife. Division staff:

(1) Conduct scientific assessments of the health, status, and trends of populations of priority species, and the quantity and ecological function of important aquatic habitat.

(2) Coordinate the National Fish Passage Program and National Fish Habitat Action Plan activities for the Service.

(3) Work with Federal, State, and Tribal partners to protect, restore, and enhance aquatic habitat.

(4) Coordinate fisheries management actions under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended. Also coordinate with and provide assistance to other Federal agencies, States, tribes, and local governments in the development, protection, and enhancement of native fish.

(5) Coordinate fish and aquatic species population management and recovery actions within the national network of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices.

(6) Coordinate with and approve the natural resources management activities of the Department of Defense and military services under the authorities of the Sikes Act and subsequent amendments.

(7) Coordinate, analyze, and report on activities and issues involving aquatic invasive species, including:

(a) Coordinating activities related to the injurious wildlife Lacey Act requirements, Executive Order 13112 (Invasive Species), and implementation of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (as amended by the National Invasive Species Act of 1996); and

(b) Protecting aquatic resources through prevention and control of destructive invasive species, like Asian carp, which threaten our economy, safety, and the viability of native populations and their habitats.

(8) Coordinate, analyze, and report on activities and issues involving operation of the National Fish Hatchery System. This program involves:

(a) Developing national criteria and standards for effective and efficient operation of our national hatcheries.

(b) Coordinating activities related to the national broodstock program and egg allocation system.

(c) Maintaining fish production and distribution records.

(d) Coordinating with Federal water development agencies to secure funding to support fishery mitigation propagation and stocking activities related to fisheries lost as a result of those water projects.

(e) Coordinating the Service's aquatic animal health policy and fish health certification activities consistent with 50 CFR.

(f) Recommending priorities and rankings for Fish Technology and Fish Health Center projects related to conservation genetics, aquatic animal nutrition, cryopreservation, propagation technology, diseases, and other issues.

(g) Managing the National Fish Hatchery System portfolio of constructed real property, which includes budgeting, performance management, and overall monitoring and reporting.

(9) Coordinate activities to obtain U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for drugs, chemicals, and therapeutants needed in aquaculture and fisheries management programs.

B. The Division of Budget and Communications is responsible for the formulation, justification, presentation, conduct, and execution of the program's budget and all related activities. Division staff:

(1) Support the fish and aquatic conservation programs with a wide range of administrative, budgetary, financial, contracting, and policy concerns.

(2) Coordinate current and past-year budget execution and tracking, current year allocation to the regions, out-year budget preparation and presentation, and day-to-day administrative and financial activities primarily in headquarters, but also in support of the regions.

(3) Develop plans and policy and formulate and execute the budget at the national level.

(4) Develop publications, social media releases, web sites, and other communication tools.

(5) Educate the public about fish and aquatic species and their habitat.

(6) Facilitate Service representation and participation on fishery councils, commissions, and similar inter-jurisdictional or international forums.

(7) Provide congressional and legislative support.

(8) Work with national and international organizations on fish and aquatic resource management issues, which include:

(a) Coordinating the federally chartered Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, and

(b) Providing the Project Officer for the nonprofit Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, which receives Federal funds that the Service administers.

(9) Develop and support conservation education initiatives for the American people, particularly with Native American youth and youth in underserved rural and urban areas.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Assistant Director – Fish and Aquatic Conservation

