



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Washington, D.C. 20240

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March 20, 2006

In Reply Refer To:
6500 (WO-230) P

Instruction Memorandum No. 2006-114

Expires: 09/30/2007

To: All Field Officials

From: Director 

Subject: State Wildlife Action Plans

Program Areas: Wildlife and Planning

Purposes: The purpose of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to direct the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State Directors, District and Field Managers to consider State Wildlife Action Plans (also known as Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies) in land use and conservation planning on BLM-administered lands.

Policy/Action: The BLM participation and support of State Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy development.

Budget Impact: None.

Background: In 2001, the U.S. Congress created the State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Program and Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program (WCRP), and charged each state and territory with developing a State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) as a condition of receiving Federal funds through the programs. Each state was required to submit its CWCS to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by October 2005. These strategies should provide a proactive framework for cooperative conservation efforts to maintain thriving fish and wildlife populations.

The states have completed their strategies and will begin implementation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2006. Completion of these plans marks an historic event in the history of wildlife conservation in the United States, building on two other highly successful federal-state wildlife conservation models, the 1937 Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson Act), and the 1950 Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson Act). Like these successful laws, the State Wildlife Grant Program and Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program provide funding to state agencies to support on-the-ground conservation projects, and provide states a better opportunity to fulfill their mission to conserve all wildlife species while optimizing wildlife-related recreation and education.

The State Wildlife Action Plans will guide the allocation of these funds on conservation priorities in the state and provide valuable direction for other funds and programs.

Each state's plan identifies priority wildlife species and habitats, assesses threats to their survival, and identifies long-term conservation actions needed in the state, including those on BLM-administered public lands. Collectively, the strategies provide a solid foundation for furthering wildlife conservation, and an opportunity for the states, federal agencies, and other conservation partners to strategically address their individual and coordinated roles and responsibilities in conservation efforts.

The states and the BLM both benefit from furthering cooperation in the management of fish and wildlife and habitat resources. Examples of specific areas for cooperation include:

- Developing and/or otherwise sharing data and other information on fish and wildlife, including population status, and habitat occurrence and condition;
- Conducting research and studies to develop data and other information on cause-and-effect relationships between fish and wildlife and their habitats; and
- Establishing land management and habitat objectives and priorities that consider: working across jurisdictional boundaries wherever appropriate and feasible; actively sharing expertise and experience in implementing the strategies and monitoring outcomes; and, proactively engaging diverse stakeholders in the effective development and implementation of conservation and management actions.

In August 2004, President George W. Bush issued Executive Order 13352, "Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation" which provided direction to the Executive Branch Departments and Agencies to carry out programs, projects and activities that facilitate cooperative conservation with local and state governments. Working cooperatively with your respective state in implementing the Wildlife Action Plan/Comprehensive State Wildlife Strategy supports the intent of this Executive Order.

In addition, BLM support and use of the State Wildlife Action Plans in implementing the BLM mission promotes Department of the Interior Policy on state-federal relationships, as detailed in 43 CFR Part 24. The use of CWCS's is also listed in the Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), as a resource to draw from in or while working on land use plans. Therefore, I urge all BLM leadership and staff to actively support implementation of these plans whenever and wherever practicable, consistent with the BLM land use planning process.

Contact: Additional information about the State Wildlife Action Plans and State Wildlife Grant Program is available at http://teaming.com/state_wildlifestrategies.htm. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Cal McCluskey, Senior Wildlife Specialist at (208) 373-4042.