

**Memorandum of Agreement for
Primary Administration of Internal Operations
Supporting the Department’s Interior Regional Boundaries**

This Memorandum of Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into between U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Regional Directors to ensure cohesive and continuous oversight of key resource and program objectives for the Service.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Department-wide reorganization realigns the Department’s bureau boundaries primarily along watershed and state boundaries. The reorganization into 12 regions focuses coordination to strengthen engagement across its Bureaus and better coordinate decision-making to improve customer service. The Secretary established 12 Field Special Assistants (FSAs) who have been engaging their Regional Field Executive Committees to find solutions that will:

- Enhance cooperation and collaboration with States, Tribes, local governments, and other key stakeholders
- Improve problem solving by resolving jurisdictional conflicts within the region; and
- Strengthen relationships and communication with States, counties, and communities to ensure their needs are considered.

II. PURPOSE

The realignment along the Interior regions has created some situations where operational and management continuity of the Service’s mission and objectives would be impeded. Given the shared goals and relationships with States, which is strongest when they coordinate with a single Regional Director and other long-standing partnerships, the Service needs to establish primary jurisdiction in these instances. This memorandum provides for the efficient internal operation of Service line and administrative management functions and designates which regional offices will have primary jurisdiction in these geographies.

III. AUTHORITY

Primary administrative and management jurisdiction for staff and facilities will continue to reside under the regional office where the preponderance of systems, support and operations are located. Regional Directors will work closely with their Regional Directorate teams and with adjacent Regional Directors to strengthen relationships and decision making across bureaus and Interior Regions in support of the Department’s goals for each region.

Albuquerque Regional Office: The FWS Regional Office in Albuquerque will retain authority and jurisdiction for FWS operations in:

- Interior Region 6
- Interior Region 7 (New Mexico only)
- Interior Region 8 (Arizona only)

The Albuquerque Regional Office will continue to manage and administer statutory work requirements at stations within the State of New Mexico. This will maintain efficiencies and ensure focus on the Interior Regional Field Committee's goals of improved collaboration on recreational access, tribal partnerships, and habitat corridors as well as internal Service goals including support for energy development and ESA consultations. This is particularly important given the large energy development underway in the Permian Basin that sprawls across the Texas / New Mexico State lines and having one unified Regional Office oversee Service efforts is key to implement the Secretary's priorities.

The Albuquerque Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Sacramento Regional Office that has retained authority for FWS options in Southern Nevada and Southern California. Collaboration and coordination should be accomplished in such a manner that effectively assures all FWS interest are adequately represented to the Interior Field Special Assistant and the Interior Field Executive Committee for Interior Region 8.

Sacramento Regional Office: The FWS Regional Office in **Sacramento** will retain authority and jurisdiction for FWS operations in:

- Interior Region 10 (Excluding Sheldon NWR in Northern Nevada)
- Interior Region 8 (Southern California and Southern Nevada only)

The Sacramento Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Portland Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for the operations in Southern Oregon and Northern Nevada that are part of Interior Region 10. The Sacramento Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Albuquerque Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for Interior Region 8 which includes Southern Nevada and Southern California. Collaboration and coordination should be accomplished in such a manner that effectively assures all FWS interest are adequately represented to the Interior Field Special Assistant and the Interior Field Executive Committees.

Lakewood Regional Office: The FWS Regional Office in Lakewood will retain authority and jurisdiction for FWS operations in:

- Interior Region 5
- Interior Region 7 (excluding New Mexico)
- Interior Region 9 (only Western Montana)

The Lakewood Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Portland Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for the operations in Western Montana that are part of Interior Region 9. The Lakewood Regional Office will proactively collaborate with Albuquerque Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for Interior Region 7 on matters in New Mexico. Collaboration and coordination should be accomplished in such a manner that effectively assures all FWS interest are adequately represented to the Interior Field Special Assistant and the Interior Field Executive Committees.

Portland Regional Office: The FWS Regional Office in **Portland** will retain authority and jurisdiction for FWS operations in:

- Interior Region 9 (excluding Montana units)
- Interior Region 10 (only Sheldon NWR in Northern Nevada)

Interior Region 12

The Portland Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Sacramento Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for the operations in Southern Oregon and Northern Nevada that are part of Interior Region 10. The Portland Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Lakewood Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for Interior Region 9, which includes parts of Western Montana. Collaboration and coordination should be accomplished in such a manner that effectively assures all FWS interest are adequately represented to the Interior Field Special Assistant and the Interior Field Executive Committees.

Bloomington Regional Office: The FWS Regional Office in **Bloomington** will retain authority and jurisdiction for FWS operations in:

- Interior Region 3
- Interior Region 4 (Iowa and Missouri only)

The Bloomington Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Atlanta Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for the operations in Iowa and Missouri that are part of Interior Region 4. Collaboration and coordination should be accomplished in such a manner that effectively assures all FWS interest are adequately represented to the Interior Field Special Assistant and the Interior Field Executive Committees.

Atlanta Regional Office: The FWS Regional Office in **Atlanta** will retain authority and jurisdiction for FWS operations in:

- Interior Region 1 (only Kentucky)
- Interior Region 2
- Interior Region 4 (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi only)

The Atlanta Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Hadley Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for the operations in Kentucky that are part of Interior Region 1. The Atlanta Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Bloomington Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for Interior Region 4 which includes Iowa and Missouri. Collaboration and coordination should be accomplished in such a manner that effectively assures all FWS interest are adequately represented to the Interior Field Special Assistant and the Interior Field Executive Committees.

Hadley Regional Office: The FWS Regional Office in **Hadley** will retain authority and jurisdiction for FWS operations in:

- Interior Region 1 (excluding Kentucky)

The Hadley Regional Office will proactively collaborate with the Atlanta Regional Office to ensure that there is full coordination on FSA goals for the operations in Kentucky that are part of Interior Region 1. Collaboration and coordination should be accomplished in such a manner that effectively assures all FWS interest are adequately represented to the Interior Field Special Assistant and the Interior Field Executive Committees.

WHEREAS, the Regional Directors will work closely with the Regional Directorate Teams they lead utilizing a range of tools and performance requirements related to strengthening relationships and decision making across Interior bureaus.

WHEREAS, the Regional Directors will collaborate with respect to all Interior Regional goals to ensure that the Department by way of the FSA will achieve its on-the-ground resource milestones and collaboration goals, and demonstrate results.

NOW, THEREFORE the Parties will:

1. Collaborate to ensure the implementation of the Secretary's Interior Regional goals as set forth by the FSAs and their Regional Field Committees.
2. Ensure full representation with adjacent Interior Regions to support the goals of the FSA.
3. Ensure the lines of communications across Interior Regions and the Service's Regional offices.
4. Utilize the Field Committees to ensure substantive connections with regional office and field station staff across Interior and to solve problems before they become problems.



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