



In partial response to Congress's unprecedented \$400 million appropriation to the Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency, USDA Forest Service and the Smithsonian Institution, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) convened the second Conservation Leadership Forum, a two-day workshop on climate change adaptation. Held at the National Conservation Training Center in late January, the workshop brought together representatives from federal and state natural resource agencies and nongovernmental conservation and environmental organizations to discuss the FWS's strategy for climate change adaptation.

The workshop helped set the stage for the development of a National Fish and Wildlife Adaptation Strategy. Workshop participants discussed the purpose, vision and guiding principles of the strategy. Guiding principles included: a national framework for cooperative climate response, a focus on national boundaries but with the recognition of the international nature of fish and wildlife resources, a philosophy of collaboration and interdependence, landscape-scale science and management approaches, the integration of adaptation and mitigation efforts, and a pragmatic approach with respect to ecological disruptions and the sustainability of biodiversity and functioning ecosystems.

The expansive nature of collaboration envisioned by the FWS includes all bureaus within the Interior Department of Interior; the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, Animal and Plant Health Service, and Natural Resource Conservation Service; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Army Corps of Engineers; state natural resource and agricultural agencies; non-governmental organizations; and private sector companies. The FWS has compiled an impressive list of landscape and regional conservation efforts, which includes well-known efforts such as Joint Ventures, Fish Habitat Partnerships and the Western Governors' Association's Wildlife Corridors Initiative. Efforts are underway to identify additional partnerships that exist across the continent.

A "strawman" outline has been developed to guide the adaptation strategy. Landscape Conservation Cooperatives and the National Climate Change and Wildlife Service Center will play critical roles in science information gathering and exchange and in adaptive-management approaches. The FWS is actively soliciting input to refine the adaptation strategy outline and, ultimately, the strategy itself. To that end, the FWS hosts a [Climate Change Adaptation Web site](#) to inform the public about the strategy and to gather additional comments as the strategy is being developed. Further, the

FWS will hold a listening session at the upcoming 75<sup>th</sup>

North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference this March in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. All interested parties are invited to register for the conference and attend the listening session. (saw)