



## fact sheet

**OUR CLIMATE IS CHANGING**, and these changes are already impacting the nation's valuable natural resources and the people, communities and economies that depend on them. Changes are expected to significantly increase over time, challenging our ability to manage and sustain these resources and the essential services they provide Americans every day. By taking steps now to help safeguard the nation's natural resources against the impacts of climate change, we will be better able to limit future damages and their associated costs, and more effectively take advantage of beneficial opportunities.

### GOALS

The *Strategy* identifies seven goals to help fish, wildlife, plants and ecosystems cope with the impacts of climate change. These goals were developed collectively by diverse teams of federal, state, and tribal technical experts, based on existing research and understanding regarding the needs of these valuable resources.

#### Goal 1

Conserve habitat to support healthy fish, wildlife and plant populations and ecosystem functions in a changing climate.

#### Goal 2

Manage species and habitats to protect ecosystem functions and provide sustainable cultural, subsistence, recreational, and commercial use in a changing climate.

#### Goal 3

Enhance capacity for effective management in a changing climate.

#### Goal 4

Support adaptive management in a changing climate through integrated observation and monitoring and improved decision support tools.

#### Goal 5

Increase knowledge and information on impacts and responses of fish, wildlife and plants to a changing climate.

#### Goal 6

Increase awareness and motivate action to safeguard fish, wildlife and plants in a changing climate.

#### Goal 7

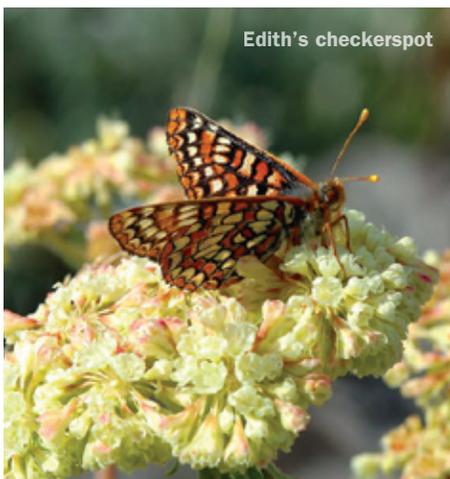
Reduce non-climate stressors to help fish, wildlife, plants, and ecosystems adapt to a changing climate.

**VISION** Ecological systems will sustain healthy, diverse, and abundant populations of fish, wildlife and plants. Those systems will continue to provide valuable cultural, economic and environmental benefits in a world impacted by global climate change.



GARY WISE

**PURPOSE** The purpose of the *Strategy* is to inspire and enable natural resource professionals and other decision makers to take action to conserve fish, wildlife, plants and ecosystem functions, as well as the human uses, values and benefits these natural systems provide, in a changing climate. The *Strategy* provides a basis for sensible actions that can be taken now, as well as guidance on climate adaptation measures to safeguard natural resources against future climate change impacts. It also describes mechanisms for encouraging collaboration among all levels of government, conservation organizations and private landowners.



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SHELLEY ELLIS/NWF

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## WHAT IS IT?

The National Fish, Wildlife and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy is a comprehensive, multi-partner response to the threat of climate change in the United States. It is a call to action—a framework for effective steps that can be taken, or at least initiated, over the next five to 10 years based on climate change projections for the next century. It is designed to be a key part of the nation’s larger response to a changing climate, and to guide responsible actions by natural resource managers and other decision-makers at all levels of government.

### How the Strategy is structured

The Strategy has five major chapters supported by ecosystem-specific background papers:

**Chapter 1: Introduction** explains the origins, vision, guiding principles, and development of this effort.

**Chapter 2: Impacts of Climate Change** describes major current and projected impacts of climate change on the eight major ecosystems of the United States, and on the fish, wildlife and plant species they support.

**Chapter 3: Goals & Strategies** lays out the goals, strategies, and actions that can help natural systems become more resilient in the face of climate impacts.

**Chapter 4: Opportunities for Multiple Sectors** describes opportunities for multiple sectors to increase the resilience of fish, wildlife and plants while promoting adaptation of infrastructure, businesses and communities.

**Chapter 5: Implementation** discusses implementation and integration, outlining how stakeholders at all levels of government can use this Strategy as a resource.

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## WHO IS INVOLVED?

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the New York Division of Fish, Wildlife, & Marine Resources (representing state fish and wildlife agencies more broadly) co-led development of the Strategy. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies also provided support for the effort.

The Strategy was developed with input from a wide variety of federal, state, and tribal representatives, along with active engagement and input from non-government organizations, industry groups, and private landowners.

An intergovernmental Steering Committee has provided input and oversight for development of the Strategy. Co-chaired by USFWS, NOAA, and the State of New York, the Steering Committee consisted of representatives from 15 federal agencies with management authorities for fish, wildlife, plants, or habitat, as well as representatives from five state fish and wildlife agencies and two inter-tribal commissions. The Steering Committee was supported by a Management Team composed of staff from the co-chairing organizations, as well as five Technical Teams of managers and researchers who were primarily responsible for drafting the Strategy.



JAMES JORDAN

**BACKGROUND** During the past decade there has been an increasing number of calls by government and non-governmental entities for a national effort to better understand, prepare for and address the impacts of climate change on natural resources and the communities that depend on them. These calls helped lay the foundation for development of this Strategy.

In 2009, Congress urged the White House Council on Environmental Quality and the Department of the Interior (DOI) to develop a national, government-wide climate adaptation strategy to assist fish, wildlife, plants, and related ecological processes in becoming more resilient, adapting to, and surviving the impacts of climate change as part of the Fiscal Year 2010 Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act Conference Report.



ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

Please visit [www.wildlifeadaptationstrategy.gov](http://www.wildlifeadaptationstrategy.gov)

