



MEMORANDUM

December 9, 2024



To: State Fish and Wildlife Agency Directors, Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Governor of Guam, Governor of U.S. Virgin Islands, Governor of American Samoa, Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Mayor of the District of Columbia.

Next year marks the 20th anniversary for State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs). Most State, Territory, and the District of Columbia fish and wildlife agencies (agencies) are currently working on the third generation of their SWAPs, marking an important milestone in the conservation of America's wildlife. SWAP revision and implementation are supported with critical funding from the State Wildlife Grant Program.

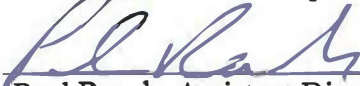
Comprehensive Review of the SWAPs must occur at least every ten years and most agencies must complete this process by October 1, 2025. Agencies subject to this deadline are provided in the Attachment. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) have jointly developed guidance, tools, and best practices to support this process. In particular, we encourage your staff to use the [Guidance for Wildlife Action Plan Review and Revision](#). We also recommend early and frequent communication with the [Office of Conservation Investment](#) (CI) staff in your Service Region. In the event you are unable to meet this deadline, please contact your CI Regional Office as soon as possible to discuss options. The Service will update guidance on late submission of a SWAP in early 2025.

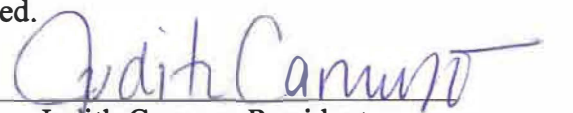
We applaud the efforts underway by many agencies to improve the accessibility and use of their SWAPs by developing digital versions. In April, AFWA and the Service released the [Digital SWAP Interim Guidance](#) to support the development of digital SWAPs and ensure national consistency in their review and approval. As noted in this guidance, we encourage your staff to use the [SWAP Summary Template](#) as an organizational tool to help streamline the review process. Any agency submitting a digital or traditional PDF-based SWAP may use the template, and its use is voluntary.

A Regional Review Team (RRT) is responsible for recommending approval of your Comprehensive Review. An RRT consists of a CI Regional Manager or Service Assistant Regional Director and a cooperating agency director, with support from designated staff. Agency directors are appointed by the regional fish and wildlife associations. We encourage you to reach out to your regional association if it has not yet designated a director to serve on the RRT for your Comprehensive Review.

We are committed to supporting a timely review and approval process. You can contribute to that effort by using the SWAP Summary Template and maintaining close coordination with CI Regional staff. We recognize that review delays may nonetheless occur. The Service therefore authorizes implementation of your revised SWAP upon submission to your respective CI Regional Office.

Revision and approval of SWAPs require the expertise of many dedicated conservation professionals. This team effort is reflective of the important roles and responsibilities of the agencies, AFWA, and the Service in conserving our Nation's biodiversity. The SWAPs will continue to play a key role in restoring habitats and species of greatest conservation need.


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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service


Judith Camuso, President
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies