



For Immediate Release
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NWRA Applauds Confirmation of Sam Hamilton as Director of Fish & Wildlife Service

The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) congratulates Sam Hamilton on his confirmation as the next Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Hamilton began his career building fences on national wildlife refuges with the Youth Conservation Corps and most recently served as the director of the agency's Southeast Region. He was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on July 31, 2009.

"Hamilton is the right person at the right time," said Evan Hirsche, President of the NWRA. "In the face of climate change and other challenges to national wildlife refuges and treasured landscapes, it is more important than ever to have a Director who has both the scientific expertise and vision to achieve lasting conservation results."

Hamilton will lead the FWS within the U.S. Department of the Interior - the agency responsible for managing the National Wildlife Refuge System and National Fish Hatchery System, as well as enforcing the Endangered Species Act. Previously, Hamilton served as the FWS Director of the Southeast Region with authority over 128 wildlife refuges and was instrumental in restoring vital habitat in the Everglades. Hamilton also initiated innovative carbon sequestration projects that have saved approximately 80,000 acres of wildlife habitat.

Throughout his career Hamilton has held many positions within the FWS, including serving as the agency's state administrator in Texas, where he oversaw implementation of the Endangered Species Act. He is a Mississippi native and graduate of Mississippi State University.

"Sam Hamilton has been a pioneer in innovative strategies to protect and restore wildlife habitat; as Director of FWS, he will have an opportunity to articulate and implement a larger conservation vision for the nation," said Hirsche. "We send him our congratulations and look forward to working with him to further the goals and mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System while strengthening the lands and waters beyond their boundaries."

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to conserve America's wildlife heritage for future generations through strategic programs that protect, enhance, and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System and the landscapes beyond its boundaries that secure its ecological integrity.

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