



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Megan Durham 202/343-5634

ROBERT A. JANTZEN BECOMES DIRECTOR OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE;  
CAREER EMPLOYEE EUGENE HESTER APPOINTED DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Robert A. Jantzen was sworn in as director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by Secretary James G. Watt in a ceremony at the Department of the Interior on November 9.

"This Administration had determined that we would have professionals managing the natural resource agencies in the Department of the Interior," Watt told an assembly of Fish and Wildlife Service employees, "and Bob Jantzen has spent nearly 30 years in wildlife management with the State of Arizona. He is a career wildlife manager who has earned the respect of other professionals."

Watt said that he wanted an experienced State wildlife biologist as head of the agency because of his desire to see that fish and wildlife resources are managed scientifically and Federal-State relations improved. In addition, he said that strong leadership was needed to carry out his commitment to rehabilitate deteriorating facilities on many units of the Service's 89-million acre national wildlife refuge system.

"When I first took office, I made the commitment to overcome health and safety deficiencies in the national parks," Watt said. "Since then I have learned that for too many years the political managers of the Interior Department overlooked similar deficiencies on the national wildlife refuges and ranges managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service. We are determined to overcome these deficiencies, and to carry out this commitment we need a professional wildlife manager like Bob Jantzen."

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Jantzen, a former director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, was nominated for the Interior post in October and confirmed by the Senate on November 4. In his first remarks as director, he said that the economic situation meant that the Fish and Wildlife Service would have to "do better with perhaps fewer resources," and called for a stronger partnership between the Service, State wildlife agencies, and private organizations.

Jantzen also announced his appointment of Dr. F. Eugene Hester, an employee of the Fish and Wildlife Service since 1963, as his deputy director. Hester has been leading the agency in a temporary capacity since January, serving in the positions of acting director and acting deputy director.

"I was continually impressed with the administrative ability, character, and strength that Dr. Hester demonstrated in leading the agency over the last 10 months," Jantzen said. "We're going to make a good management team, and I'm truly pleased to have him as my deputy."

Jantzen, 53, has spent his entire career in the wildlife management profession, working for the Arizona agency from 1953 to 1981. He holds a B.S. degree in wildlife management from the University of Arizona and has studied at the graduate level. He has been past president of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and chairman of the National Waterfowl Council, and has been a representative on the executive council of The Wildlife Society. He is from Phoenix, Arizona.

Hester was the Fish and Wildlife Service's associate director for research from 1974 until assuming temporary leadership of the Service in January 1981. During part of that time he also had responsibilities for environment in addition to research. Hester has also held the positions of chief of the Division of Fishery Research and leader of the North Carolina Cooperative Fishery Research Unit. He holds an M.S. in wildlife conservation and management from North Carolina State University and a Ph.D. in zoology (fisheries) from Auburn University, and served on the zoology faculty of North Carolina State University before joining the Service. Hester, 50, is from Wendell, North Carolina.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for the Federal endangered species program, migratory bird conservation, animal damage control, operation of the national wildlife refuge system and the national fish hatchery system, fish and wildlife research, federal wildlife law enforcement, and programs aimed at minimizing environmental degradation of fish and wildlife habitat throughout the nation.

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