



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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Michael L. Smith 202-343-5650

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE UPDATES STANCE ON AQUACULTURE

In an effort to build a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with the aquaculture industry, the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director, John Turner, today announced he will make the Service's scientific and technical resources available to further the development of private aquaculture.

Turner's actions, outlined in a two-page statement issued August 11, signal a renewed Service interest in providing technical support and expertise to the Nation's rapidly growing fish-farming industry.

"Development of aquaculture," Turner noted, "can be consistent with the conservation of this Nation's wild fishery resources. In fact, it can provide some significant benefits toward conserving wild fisheries." Turner further noted that the Service recognizes not only the value of aquaculture for its contributions to the Nation's economy, but also its value in providing an increasing supply of high-quality food and reducing consumptive pressures on wild stocks.

The Service, Turner pointed out, operates 75 national fish hatcheries, producing over 230 million fish annually for the Nation's waters. The scientific needs of the Service's fish production programs and those of the aquaculture industry are quite similar, and much of its scientific work is directly applicable to industry needs.

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Turner highlighted six areas in which the Service will focus its cooperative efforts with the private fish-farming industry:

- o The Service will increase its efforts to make practical fish culture information readily available to all interested persons;
- o The Service will establish channels for regular exchange of information, concerns, and problems with representatives of the aquaculture industry;
- o The Service will operate its system of national fish hatcheries in such a manner as to serve as a model for aquaculture development and operation;
- o The Service will seek to maintain adequate fish health inspection and certification services;
- o The Service will continue its research efforts in fish health, nutrition, genetics, registration of drugs and aquacultural chemicals, maintenance of water quality, and development of culture techniques and systems; and
- o The Service will continue to provide certification of triploid fishes such as the grass carp.

Copies of the Service's new "Statement of Position in Regard to Aquaculture" are available from: Assistant Director-- Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Room 3245, 18th and C Streets NW., Washington, DC 20240; 202-343-6394.