

Program Area: Wildlife Management

Subject: Proposed guidance for the “Adopt a Fish or Wildlife Area program”

Length of Public Input Period: 21 days

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There is a need for additional resources to help manage department properties, including Wildlife, Fisheries and Habitat Areas. Partner groups can be a significant resource for managing these properties, both in financial contributions and volunteer labor. The Adopt a Fish or Wildlife Area program is a means by which the department can enter into land management partnership agreements with sponsors. This proposal would establish guidance related to sponsor selection, agreement forms and terms, acceptance of gifts, eligible activities, and sponsor recognition.

This draft guidance was developed by department staff and we will solicit comments on it for 21 days. All comments will be considered, revisions will be made to the guidance documents as needed, and final guidance will be made available to internal and external stakeholders.

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Adopt a Fish or Wildlife Area program

Wildlife Management Handbook

There is a need for additional resources to help manage department properties, including Wildlife, Fisheries and Habitat Areas. Partner groups can be a significant resource for managing these properties, both in financial contributions and volunteer labor. The Adopt a Fish or Wildlife Area program is a means by which the department can enter into land management partnership agreements with sponsors. Wildlife staff are encouraged to promote the program within their communities and target local priority management needs. To ensure a positive cost/benefit, the agreements shall include an annual minimum of three work days and 100 volunteer hours, a \$3,000 contribution, or a combination of both.

Sponsor selection

Sponsors should be selected based on how their proposed contribution fits the local priority management needs. If multiple Sponsors are interested in adopting the same Wildlife Area, it is suggested that the Area be divided among the interested sponsors or specific management activities be delegated to individual sponsor groups. If an entire Wildlife Area is already adopted, a waiting list should be developed for other interested sponsors.

Agreement form and length

Adopt a Fish or Wildlife Area agreements must be completed using form 2500-133. Agreements should be made for three years and are renewable. No sub-contracting of this agreement to other groups to complete the identified projects is allowed. Agreements must be routed for the appropriate Department signature per [Manual Code 1023](#).

Acceptance of gift

If the agreement includes a financial gift, staff should follow [Manual Code 1403.11](#) relating to the acceptance of gifts.

Eligible activities

The Adopt a Fish or Wildlife Area program is designed to be flexible to meet the locally identified property management needs. Volunteer labor or funding can be used for habitat work, facilities maintenance, or other needs. The agreement should clearly identify the activities to be completed by the sponsor in the work plan section of the form. No activities are allowed outside of this agreement unless an approval is granted by the signatory authority identified in manual code 1023.

Sponsor Recognition

Sponsors should be recognized with an Adopt a Fish or Wildlife Area sign at a visible location on the property. A sign template is available here. [\(link to template to be added\)](#) Sponsors are encouraged to fund the sign, but if not, funds can come from local operational budgets.