

CAREER PATHS IN CONSERVATION

Learn about the numerous options available for fish & wildlife professionals



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Federal Agency



Work for the federal government through a multitude of different agencies. Common positions include fish/wildlife technician, fish/wildlife biologist, fish & wildlife biologist, GIS analyst, policy specialist, etc.

Examples of federal agencies include:

- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service,
- U.S. Forest Service,
- Natural Resources Conservation Service, and
- National Park Service

State Agency



Work for state agencies includes a multitude of different positions. Each state has its own conservation department. See the state agencies handout for details on the agency in your state.

Common positions with a state agency include: fish/wildlife biologist or manager, hatchery manager, fish or wildlife educator, public educator and outreach specialist, conservation enforcement officer, fish or wildlife technician, communications and public relations specialist, and GIS specialist.

Private/Contractor



For profit organizations that are separate from State and Federal agencies and are for hire. Common work entails surveying of land or property prior to large project implementation. Often complete surveys related to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Wildlife consultants evaluate ecosystems to determine environmental impacts from proposed actions. Following standards create by the NEPA, consultants provide reports to businesses, industries, and governments to ensure quality environments.

Non-Profit/Non-Governmental



Local, Regional, National, and International organizations that are run by a Board of Directors, not a state or federal agency, and typically have 501(c)(3) charity status. Work is often completed through grants and member support. Many of these organizations work with private landowners to complete on the ground habitat creation, management, and conservation.

Opportunities include:

- Local/Regional Organizations: Land Trusts (Landtrustalliance.org)
- National Organizations: Pheasants Forever, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, etc.

Research



Design and implement research programs as a research scientist. Research informs fisheries, wildlife, and conservation decision-making to improve applied field techniques and management.

Opportunities include:

- Academia & Tenure Track
- Biological Field Stations
- Research Institutes (often non-profits)

Tribal Lands



Native American Nations consist of approximately 56 million acres of lands within the United States. These lands are largely unpopulated and are rich in both natural and cultural resources. Sustainability and care of the land is both critical and culturally important to Native American tribes. Often, these tribes have their own natural resources departments. While there are federal opportunities to work with Native American tribes through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, many tribes also have their own fisheries and wildlife biologists to manage the vast natural resources on their lands.

Military Lands



Military lands comprise approximately 25 million acres in the United States. They preserve ecologically important native habitats and very often are havens for rare and unique species. Positions are often similar to state and federal jobs, and work with endangered species, fisheries, invasive species, migratory birds, law enforcement, wetlands, environmental contaminants, and more. Open positions are typically posted and applied for through the USAJobs website, same as other federal jobs.

Other Resources:

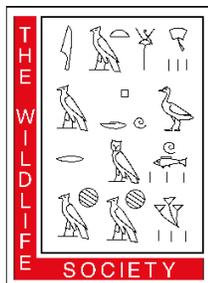
American Fisheries Society Jobs Board: <https://jobs.fisheries.org/>

The Wildlife Society Job Board: <https://careers.wildlife.org/>

Texas A&M Job Board: <https://wfscjobs.tamu.edu/job-board/>

USA Jobs: <https://www.usajobs.gov/>

Wildlife Careers: <https://wildlife.org/next-generation/career-development/careers/>



North Central Section
The Wildlife Society
wildlife.org/ncs/



North Central Division
American Fisheries Society
<https://ncd.fisheries.org/>