

Daniel M. Ashe Biography



Daniel M. Ashe was confirmed on June 30, 2011 as the 16th Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the nation's principal Federal agency dedicated to the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats. His appointment by President Obama is the culmination of a lifetime spent within the Fish and Wildlife Service family.

Dan Ashe was born and spent his childhood in Atlanta, Georgia, where his father began his 37-year career with the Service. Much of Ashe's childhood was spent on national wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries in the Southeast, where he learned to band birds, fish, hunt and, most importantly, simply enjoy the outdoors.

Prior to his appointment as Director, Ashe served as the Service's Deputy Director for Policy beginning in 2009, where he provided strategic program direction and developed policy and guidance to support and promote program development and fulfill the Service mission.

Ashe also served as the Science Advisor to the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Appointed to this position in March, 2003, he advised the Service Director and provided leadership on science policy and scientific applications to resource management. As Science Advisor, Ashe led an organizational renaissance for science and professionalism, leading the Service's efforts to respond to changes in the global climate system; shaping an agency agenda for change toward a science-driven, landscape conservation business model; defining an agency Code of Scientific and Professional Conduct; authoring new guidelines for scientific peer review and information quality; building state-of-the-art, electronic literature access for employees; and reinstating internal scientific publication outlets. He was also responsible for leading efforts to build stronger relationships with the U.S. Geological Survey, and scientific professional societies.

From 1998 to 2003, Ashe served as the *Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System*, directing operation and management of the 150 million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, and the Service's land acquisition program. During his tenure as Chief, the Refuge System experienced an unprecedented and sustained period of budget increases for operations, maintenance, construction and land acquisition. The Refuge System also saw vastly expanded public visibility, and partner and community involvement. Ashe also led the Service's migratory bird management and North American wetlands conservation programs from 1998 to 2000, contributing to significant advances in both programs' impact and effectiveness.

From 1995 to 1998, Ashe served as the Fish and Wildlife Service's Assistant Director for External Affairs, where he directed the agency's programs in legislative, public, and

Native American affairs, research coordination, and state grants-in-aid. During his tenure in this position, the Service restructured and broadened its communications programs and capacities, incorporating communications expertise into all of its program areas and employee training. The agency implemented a forward vision for Congressional relations, which led to several groundbreaking legislative accomplishments, including enactment of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act.

From 1982 until 1995, Ashe was a Member of the Professional Staff of the former Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 13 years on Capitol Hill, Ashe served in several capacities, advising the Committee's Chairmen and Members on a wide range of environmental policy issues, including endangered species and biodiversity conservation, ocean and coastal resources protection, the National Wildlife Refuge System, the National Marine Sanctuaries Program, the Clean Water Act, wetlands conservation, fisheries management and conservation, and offshore oil and gas development.

Ashe's journey to the Nation's Capitol was made possible by the National Sea Grant College Program, in 1982, when he was awarded a National Sea Grant Congressional Fellowship.

Ashe earned a graduate degree in Marine Affairs from the University of Washington, where he studied under a fellowship from the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation. His Master's thesis, on estuarine wetland mitigation, was published in the Coastal Zone Management Journal, in 1982.

Ashe is very active in local civic affairs in Montgomery County, Maryland, where he and his family reside. He is an avid waterfowl hunter, angler and tennis player. Ashe's father, William (Bill) C. Ashe, also a career employee of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, retired in 1990, and now resides in Harvard, Massachusetts.